SWORDS IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH PLAYS

by
TOMOKO WAKASA

A thesis submitted to the
University of Birmingham
for the degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Shakespeare Institute
College of Arts and Law Graduate School
University of Birmingham
3 September 2010

Contents

List of Abbreviations

AYL	Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*.
F1	First folio
Ham.	Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet.*
2H4	Shakespeare, William. *Henry IV, Part 2*.
H5	Shakespeare, William. *Henry V.*
3H6	Shakespeare, William. *Henry VI, Part 3.*
LLL	Shakespeare, William. *Love's Labour's Lost.*
MV	Shakespeare, William. *The Merchant of Venice.*
Oth.	Shakespeare, William. *Othello.*
Q1	First quarto
Q2	Second quarto
R2	Shakespeare, William. *Richard II.*
R3	Shakespeare, William. *Richard III.*
1Tamb.	Marlowe, Christopher. *Tamburlaine the Great, Part I*.
2Tamb.	Marlowe, Christopher. *Tamburlaine the Great, Part II*.

Wiv. Shakespeare, William. *The Merry Wives of Windsor.*

Introduction

In the late 1590s, the history of the sword in England reached a turning point both in real and fictional worlds. According to Egerton Castle, the rapier, the thin and light bladed sword in the latest Continental fashion, was introduced into England in the late 1570s and gained popularity after 1580, especially among the fashion-conscious young gentlemen and aristocrats.[1] With the success of the Italian fencing school in London, the English schools of the art of defence began to go into decline and, along with this, the rapier suitable for the Continental fencing style rapidly replaced the traditional English sword and buckler. However, it was almost at the turn of the century when the transition to the new type of the sword and sword fighting was emotionally accepted among Londoners and was reflected in dramatic works performed in the London playhouse.

When tackling primary sources, it is recognized that voices that claim or approve this rapid change are heard in a variety of documents of the period. For example, there were published two fairly contrasting fencing manuals both of which were dedicated to

[1] Egerton Castle, *Schools and Masters of Fence: From the Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century* (1893, London: Arms and Armour, 1969) 28-29. See also Jay P. Anglin, "The Schools of Defense in Elizabethan London," *Renaissance Quarterly* 37.3 (1984): 407.

the same person, Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex: first, Vincentio Saviolo's *His Practice* published in 1595, the first treatise of the Italian fencing style originally written in the English language, and second, George Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence* in 1599, the only manual of the traditional English art of defence in the sixteenth century. The former is a "simple Discourse, of managing weapons, and dealing in honorable Quarrels" which the author claims to have been induced to give pains to write.[2] Saviolo further insists the advantage of the rapier and dagger fight over any other military exercise of the body, "because there is very great and necessarie vse thereof, not onely in generall warres, but also in particular combats, & many other accidents."[3] It is "the perfect knowledge and practise" that makes a man of small stature without physical strength able to subdue and overcome "the fierce brauing pride of tall and strong bodies" with quick movements of his body and fine skills in manipulating his rapier and dagger.[4] On the contrary, Silver laments in the epistle to Essex that "Fencing… in this new fangled age, is like our fashions, euerie daye a change, resembling the Camelion, who altereth himselfe into all colours saue white: so Fencing changeth into all wards saue the right" and claims "that there is no certaine defence in the Rapier, and that there

---

[2] Vincentio Saviolo, *Vincentio Saviolo His Practice. In two bookes. The first intreating of the use of the rapier and dagger. The second, of honor and honourable quarrels* (1595) A3^{r}, B1^{v}.
[3] Saviolo B1^{v}.
[4] Saviolo B1^{v}.

is great aduantage in the short Sword against the long Rapier, or all maner of Rapiers in generall, of what length soeuer."[5] His following admonishment to English readers urges them not to follow the Continental fashion, condemning its weakness and harmfulness, and to go back to the art of defence that their own forefathers admitted to be "true."[6]

This conflict is naturally reflected in dramatic works of the period. J. Dover Wilson considers that Tybalt and Mercutio in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, first performed in 1595, can be representatives of each fencing school. "Tybalt… is evidently meant to represent a disciple of Saviolo's, and Silver's complaint of 'the great losse of our English gallants…' might almost be a reference to the death of Mercutio."[7] Noting how Shakespeare adapts his references to fencing accordingly, Wilson asserts that his "sympathies are clearly with the old fashion that George Silver loved," but the change is marked by "Hotspur's contemptuous reference to Prince Hal as 'that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales'" in the first part of *Henry IV*,[8] first performed in 1597. The increasing popularity of the rapier may explain the fact that the word, rapier, is found only once in the surviving works of Christopher Marlowe who died in 1593, whereas it is used twenty nine times in Shakespeare's works.

---

[5] George Silver, *Paradoxes of Defence* (London, 1599; Oxford: Oxford UP, 1933) A3^{r}, A6^{r}.
[6] Silver, *Paradoxes* B1^{r}-B2^{r}.
[7] J. Dover Wilson, introduction, *Paradoxes of Defence*, by George Silver (1599, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1933) ix.
[8] Wilson, introduction ix.

Charles Edelman sheds light on Shakespeare's transformation of "the playhouse's traditional connection with swordfighting into a versatile and important poetic element within the great poetry of his plays."[9] Based on his close examination of sword fighting scenes supported by his practical experience in the theatre, he aims to "show that Shakespeare intended the swordfighting sequences in his plays to be an integral part of them as poetic works, and that this intention was achieved by his bringing together of several previously separate elements": first, "the already-existent tradition of combat sport in the playhouses, and the Elizabethans' enthusiasm for it," second, "the excitement of something new," and third, "the cult of Elizabeth, the neo-medieval orientation of so much of Elizabethan art and society."[10] His attempts to reconstruct the original staging is quite suggestive when we enquire into the transition of the sword, but he are interested mainly in stage fights and not so much in the sword itself, which is the main concern of this dissertation.

Jennifer A. Low focuses on the popularity of the duel, "a form of ritualized violence," in the new imported fencing style with the rapier, as an instrument of learning "a great deal about English society between 1580 and 1620"[11] and of enquiring

---

[9] Charles Edelman, *Brawl ridiculous: Swordfighting in Shakespeare's Plays* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1992) 10.
[10] Edelman 192.
[11] Jennifer A. Low, *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 5.

into the changing sense of gender, rank, and nationality of the period. She further shows the interrelationship between the social phenomenon and theatrical representation of the duel and duellists. Her argument on the representation of duellists can be expanded into the changing representation of the characteristics of each sword's carrier.

This dissertation attempts to grasp the changing vogue of the sword along with the sword fighting in the late 1590s and their influence, which will also serve to bridge the social and theatrical worlds, discussing first the sword in contemporary English society and then the visual and verbal representation of the sword in Early Modern English drama. The first chapter examines the sword outside of the theatre. The transition from the warlike sword toward the rapier first took place on the Continent at around the beginning of the sixteenth century. The direct cause of this movement was the invention of firearms. The improvement of the new technology into a practical and powerful weapon and the following development of armour and military tactics inevitably caused the sword to lose the position of the primary weapon on the battle-field, even though the weapon was not totally abandoned either in or out of the field. Its consequent development into the elegant rapier with a thin and light blade shows that it survived by shifting its primary function of a practical weapon for battle or self protection to that of a masculine ornament signifying its carrier's social class and estate.

This tendency also appears in the new style of fencing with the rapier and dagger also developed on the Continent, the history of which will be surveyed through the Continental fencing manuals. The new way of manipulating the rapier which is based on mathematical and geometrical knowledge became much more elaborate and complicated. Therefore, the training of it was not only a way of acquiring the art of defence and defeating enemies, but also to refine the movement of the body of an aristocrat. Low, in her argument about a gentleman's understanding of masculine space, points out that the new kind of fighting in the use of the rapier influenced the gesture and behaviour of those of the upper classes.[12]

Notwithstanding a strong resistance by the English masters of arms, in the 1590s, the dramatic transition from the traditional English sword and buckler toward the new Continental rapier and dagger occurred especially among the youths of the upper social classes. The conflict between the old and the new will be examined through the above-mentioned two books on fencing written by Saviolo and Silver. Both of them record the attempt of the masters of the new style to differentiate their noble science from the rude English art of defence, by luxuriously furbishing their school or by making their pupils' behaviour sophisticated. It can be interpreted that the art of fencing was considered as an "ornament" worn by men of higher rank.

[12] Low 5-6, 41-42.

The last part of the first chapter will analyze the changing descriptions in the royal proclamations regarding weaponry and the prevention of social disorder, especially focusing on the regulation of the sword blade's length. It will be recognized that the aspects of a sword that these laws pay attention to did not remain the same: they show a decreasing interest in its function as a murderous and injurious weapon and instead an increasing interest in its decorative element. People came to be fond of bearing swords of excess lengths and ornament. It was not considered simply as a changing fashion, but also as a phenomenon which could disturb the hierarchical order. The royal proclamations, so-called "Sumptuary Laws," stated lengths of and ornaments on swords according to their owners' social classes and wealth for the purpose of preserving the hierarchical order and the social moral. So, a sword exceeding the limitations could imply the disorder in the hierarchical system. This changing interest in swords found in the royal proclamations also supports the discussion of how the function of the sword in the society had changed.

Shifting the focus from the outside to inside the theatre, Chapter two will examine sword weapons employed as stage properties, which will be called "sword properties" here, in Early Modern performance. The lack of concrete evidence, however, makes it difficult to answer specific questions on them, such as what types of swords were

actually used onstage, of what materials they were made, or for what purpose they appeared onstage. The most detailed descriptions are the documents relating to the Revels Office, but they cannot be always applied to the usage of sword properties in the public playhouse; and *Henslowe's Diary*, "the most valuable and important source for information about the working arrangements of the Elizabethan public theatres,"[13] says much less about bladed weapons. Accounts of eyewitnesses of contemporary performances are limited, too. There is an equally limited amount of pictorial evidence, such as the famous drawing of a scene from *Titus Andronicus* most probably drawn by Henry Peacham or title page woodcuts of printed texts, and furthermore, the reliability of them as illustrations of actual theatre practice remains uncertain.

It has been generally claimed that the sword properties in the public playhouses were made of metallic materials and that various shapes of sword props were treated inclusively without much care. This explanation can be applied to most of the cases, as is exemplified by Peacham's drawing where several kinds of sword properties seem randomly given to the depicted characters without concerning their outward differences. However, it is still possible to think that the people involved in theatre business were

[13] R. A. Foakes, preface, *Henslowe's Diary*, by Philip Henslowe, eds. Foakes, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) vii.

somehow concerned about the different impressions or visual effects given by the different shapes or materials of blades and tried to employ appropriate ones accordingly.

The important clue to this enquiry is the two entries of sword properties in the inventories Philip Henslowe left, "j longe sorde" and "xvij foyles,"[14] which are placed in different inventories with the same date, March 10, 1598. A long sword is a Medieval sword with an extremely long and gigantic blade and a foil is a sword with a fake blade used to practice fencing or to perform swordfighting onstage. It seems likely that the separate categorization was done not by accident but by intention. It is worth investigating what it can indicate in terms of sword properties. What was the real purpose of differentiating a long sword and foils: their distinctive outward features, their materials, or their functions? This question will be partly answered by exploring the definition of these words in the theatrical terminology shared among those involved in the stage business including Henslowe. In this attempt, the second chapter examines the usage of the term, foil, in the sword fighting scene between Hamlet and Laertes in three texts of *Hamlet*, the first and second quartos and the first folio. It will suggest the probability that more attention was paid to the outward appearance and the visual impression of sword properties than it has been speculated.

---

[14] Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, eds. R. A. Foakes, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 318, 320.

Additionally, the last part of this chapter will examine the possibility that not all the sword properties were made of metallic materials. There is a likeliness that the separately entered long sword had a function onstage different from that of other foils, because the long sword is categorized not as a property but as a costume, and therefore it was not necessarily made of the same materials as foils, which were most probably of metal. In the Revels Accounts, the material for most of the sword properties for Court entertainments are specified as wood. They also record ornamental elements added to them, such as painting, gilding, or plating. As concerns the long sword in Henslowe's inventory, it is not completely impossible to deem that the public playhouse followed these examples of the Revels Office, which may explain the distinction in Henslowe's inventory, that is, it was manufactured of wood and richly decorated.

There are a variety of vocabularies signifying sword weapons found in play texts, but they are often too symbolic or metaphoric to rely on for the enquiry into the sword properties actually seen onstage. However, it can be said that the visual language of these props was supported by poetical expressions spoken by actors. Chapter three examines the image of swords expressed in words and their representation of characteristics in Early Modern English drama; and also traces its change reflecting the transition of the sword in the real world, as discussed in the first chapter.

The type of sword mainly focused on here is a sword with a curving blade, which is variously named accordingly, such as falchion, scimitar, cutlass, and so forth. The curved sword is the one that had been less common in Europe where the majority of swords had had a straight blade in spite of their changing fashion. It is assumed that this curving shape of blade presented a peculiar outward appearance to English audiences; and besides, the sound of each of those terms was comparatively unfamiliar to the people of the period. It is likely that there were some particular reasons for authors to take the trouble to seek out these uncommon words and insert them into the lines of their plays. In some cases, the word usage is simply explained by the rules of metre of a verse drama: they were just convenient synonyms of the more general word, sword. However, there are other cases where some poetic or dramatic effects were expected to be added through their association with specific characteristics, which will be made clearer in comparison with another type of sword, the rapier.

It is worth comparing these two types for they can be placed as binary opposites to each other in terms of outward appearance, function, and poetical representations. Their distinctive representations will be shown by the figures typically linked to each of these swords appearing in non-dramatic documents with some reference to examples in dramatic works. On the one hand, the typical carriers of the rapier usually bear the

Continental atmosphere, whether they are originally from the Continental countries or just emulate them. On the other hand, the figures wearing the curved sword are those geographically, temporally, or mentally distant from contemporary England, such as ancient Mediterraneans, ancient Britons, or exotic figures. It could also be said that the type of sword is frequently associated with the "other" of their contemporary English society.

Based on the examination above, the latter part of this chapter attempts to trace the changing representation of the curved sword in dramatic works through which we can catch a glimpse of the period of transition in the theatrical world. Its starting point is the cutlass as the sword of Tamburlaine in both parts of *Tamburlaine the Great*, one of the most influential works written by Christopher Marlowe and first performed in 1587. Tamburlaine's cutlass is one of the symbolic attributes signifying his quality, his exotic origin, extreme masculinity, and conquering power which evoke the feeling of fear and awe, "otherness" destroying the established order, and so forth. It can be interpreted that these qualities were inflected in warlike curved swords appearing in contemporary plays after that. It will be exemplified by several descriptions of these weapons including the scimitar of Aaron, the Moor in *Titus Andronicus* (1594).

However, tracing the echoes of Marlowe, it will be recognized that the curved swords' reputation reached its turning point in the late 1590s when the Tamburlaine-like characteristics became out of fashion and started to be parodied. This turning point correlates with the popularization of the rapier and the Continental fencing style, the reversal of the dramatic genre, and, above all, the turning point of the reception of Marlowe. In order to illustrate how the image of curved swords was adapted to the changing response to the Marlovian mightiness, examples of swords will be given, including the scimitar of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice* (1596) and the cutlass of Rosalind in *As You Like It* (1599). It is assumed that it was not coincident that these changes of swords both in real and fictional worlds simultaneously happened. The aim of this dissertation is to deepen the understanding of the sword in Early Modern English society and drama and its change in the late 1590s.

Chapter 1

The Development in Style of Swords and Fencing

George Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence* (1599) vividly tells us the hostile relationship between the English masters of defence and the Continental teachers of offence in England in the late 1590s. Strongly expressing his disapproval of the popularization of the Continental fencing style with rapiers, he warns all his countrymen:

> to take heed, how they submit themselues into the hands of *Italian* teachers of Defence, or straungers whatsoeuer; and to beware how they forsake or suspect their owne naturall fight, that they may by casting off of these Italianated, weake, fantasticall, and most diuellish and imperfect fights, and by exercising of their owne ancient weapons, be restored, or atchieue vnto their natural, and most manly and victorious fight againe, the dint and force whereof manie braue nations haue both felt and feared.[15]

Appealing to their patriotic feeling, he attempts to persuade them that the "*Italian* teachers" invade England corrupting the Englishmen and destroying their own

[15] Silver, *Paradoxes* B1^{r-v}.

victorious way of fighting with their "ancient weapons"; and contemptuously describes the newly imported fighting style. Whereas he blames their weakness, Italian masters condemned the English way of fighting relying on their physical strength. Silver reports a remark made by Vincentio Saviolo, one of the leading Italian fencing masters in England whose *Practice* (1595) is the first treatise of the Italian fencing style originally written in English language: "Englishmen were strong men, but had no cunning, and they would go backe too much in their fight, which was great disgrace vnto them."[16] Aroused by the "words of disgrace against Englishmen,"[17] Silver and his brother Toby Silver, challenged against them but in vain. As Silver proudly reports in his book, it was not only the Silver brothers among English masters of the art who, being enraged with or jealous of these Italian masters, "personally affronted competitors and engaged in violence against them."[18] It can be said that Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence* is also his challenge against them or "a public defense of the English system in print."[19]

It was, however, the last resistance against the irreversible trend from the traditional English way of sword fighting with the sword and buckler towards the new Continental system with the rapier and dagger. The same kind of movement had already happened on the Continent at the beginning of the sixteenth century which Alfred Hutton calls

[16] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{v}.
[17] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{v}.
[18] Anglin 408.
[19] Anglin 408.

"the most romantic period of the history of the sword, from the chivalrous weapon of the armour-clad knight to the murderous rapier of the silken-coated Mignon."[20] It was at the end of the same century when the new sword brought over the Straits of Dover to England eventually came to gain popularity among the people in London. This chapter starts with the previous period when broad and straight arming swords developed on battle-fields and then examines the historical movement in the shape of swords and the style of fencing and the change in the function of the sword in England from the end of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The development in the shape of swords is expectedly parallel to changes in the style of armour. The large replacement of the medieval chain-mail armour by heavy and firmly built plate armour consequently caused the movement from a shorter cutting sword to a much longer and heavier sword for both cutting and thrusting. The former could cut mail but could not penetrate plate and became practically useless when faced with a soldier in plate armour on the battlefield. On the other hand, the latter was designed to resist violent collisions with sturdy arms and armour and to penetrate in between the interstices of plate armour. In a fight with a soldier covered in such medieval armour, the sword was used to give a blow to it and to bash it into pieces, or to

[20] Alfred Hutton, *The Sword and the Centuries or Old Sword Days and Old Sword Ways* (1901; London: Greenhill Books, 2003) 22.

make the opponent faint or fall down, so that the point of the dagger or the sword would pierce him between the gap between parts or through the eyehole. This kind of breaking armour in battle is described in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* when Hector says, "I'll frush it and unlock the rivets all" (5.6.29) challenging a Greek soldier in "goodly armour" (5.9.2) to fight.[21] At the same time, the plate armour also encouraged the development of another type of the sword, the estoc. It is a long narrow sword generally with a more or less quadrangular blade, "usually pointed only," and, as Hutton says, its object was not the breaking of the armour but "the penetration of the strong plate armour."[22] Castle further explains that it was "carried on horseback, attached to the right side of the saddle... and was devised specially for thrusting in the event of the lance being lost or broken," while the "sword proper was carried on the horseman's girdle."[23] The estoc was a sword employed as a sort of a spare weapon in the Middle Ages and is actually the prototype of the rapier which came into vogue in the next period in Europe.

In the sixteenth century, there was a gradual decline in the use of these cumbersome arms and armour. Ewart Oakeshott points out that "[t]he years between the fall of the

---

[21] Quotations from all the works of William Shakespeare are taken from *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus (Norton: New York, 2008), and references are to their edition.

[22] Hutton 2.

[23] Castle 30-31 .

Plantagenet dynasty at Bosworth in 1485 and the deaths of Henry VIII of England and François I of France in 1547 were the last in which complete armour was worn as a matter of course upon the fields of war."[24] This decline was caused primarily by the development of firearms into weapons effective enough for practical use in the field in the fifteenth century. The muskets and the pike had dominated the battlefield from the last decade of the fifteenth century until the 1690s when the socket bayonet was introduced. It is mobility rather than stoutness that is required in the field where speeding bullets which can penetrate most plate armour are flying. The growing popularity of the new weapon made the medieval arms and armour useless and ineffective and consequently the sword which was withdrawing from its position as the primary and dominant weapon was changing its form from a broad sword to a much thinner and lighter one. Further, it also marks the change of its function from a practical field weapon into a masculine ornament as an element of civic fashion, as examined later.

It is true that the sword had still been carried by every soldier belonging to every regiment as a weapon suitable for close combat in the Elizabethan period. We can see various illustrations where swords are carried by every soldier no matter which regiment

[24] R. Ewart Oakeshott, *European Weapons and Armour: From the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000) 75.

he belongs to. For example, in Sir Philip Sidney's military funeral procession depicted in Thomas Lant's *Sequitur Celebritas & Pompa Funeris*, all the soldiers, such as targeteers, musketeers, pikemen and halberdiers, are walking in the procession wearing swords by their sides [See fig.1].[25]

Fig. 1 [Left] musketeers equipped with a sword by their side; [Right] pikemen with a sword by their side. Thomas Lant, *Sequitur Celebritas & Pompa Funeris* (London, 1588) 25, 27.

The type of the sword carried to the field was still that with a broad blade inherited from the medieval period, but as M. R. Holmes points out, compared with the medieval sword with a simple cruciform hilt, the one in the later period involves "a curious mixture of styles."[26] It has a two-edged broad blade and a round heavy pommel at the end of the cruciform hilt, which helps to balance the weapon, just as the medieval one does, but its hilt is decorated with a more elaborated finger-guard or with the basket

[25] Thomas Lant, *Sequitur Celebritas & Pompa Funeris* (London, 1588). See also the leaves in Abraham de Bruyn, *Costumes Civils & Militaires du XVIe siècle* (Bruxelles: Van Trigt, 1872).
[26] M. R. Holmes, *Arms and Armour in Tudor and Stuart London* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1957) 20.

which made its appearance in England in the 1520s and became popular by the 1540s. These types of hilts were invented partly for a fairly practical purpose: it was useful to guard their owner's hand which was not covered with a gauntlet. However, it is more likely that the development of these hilts reflects the changing meaning of carrying swords. A chronological examination of them clearly shows the movement from the sword with a simple basket hilt in its early stage and a broad blade in the early sixteenth century [see fig.2] towards the rapier with a "swept" hilt and a relatively narrow blade with a more and more elaborate workmanship in the late sixteenth century [see fig.3]. This movement reflects the shift in its chief function from a dominant weapon to fight in wars toward a symbol of the rank or the honour of the carrier, and a masculine ornament.

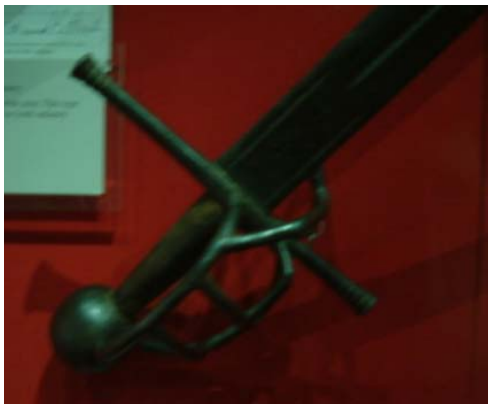

Fig. 2 A sword, probably English, about 1520. Leeds Royal Armoury Museum. Leeds. Personal photograph by author. 26 May 2009.

Fig. 3 [Left] a rapier, possibly English, about 1590; [Right] a rapier, possibly English, dated 1597. Leeds Royal Armoury Museum. Leeds. Personal photograph by author. 26 May 2009.

As for the sword worn off the battlefield, the traditional English arms from Anglo-Saxon times were the sword and buckler, that is, the broad two-edge sword and a small shield. They are depicted as the weapon peculiar to the contemporary English people in some illustrations: for example, in De Bruyn's costume plates, one figure titled "Iuuenis Anglus" carries one broad sword with a "swept" hilt and a buckler [see fig.4]. Similarly, the young figure in the foreground of Hoefnagel's map of London also has a sword and buckler by his side.[27]

Fig. 4 "Iuuenis Anglus," Abraham de. Bruyn, *Costumes Civils & Militaires du XVIe siècle*, 33.

[27] G. E. Mitton, *Maps of Old London* (London: A. and C. Black, 1908).

John Stow, an English historian and antiquarian, portrays the familiar scene of a fencing practice with swords and bucklers in his young days, where they used "wasters," wooden swords, in place of real swords, in the chapter "Sports and pastimes of old time vsed in this Citie" of his *Suruay of London*:

> The youthes of this citie, also haue vsed on holy dayes after euening prayer, ath their maysters dores, to exercise their wasters and bucklers: and the maidens (one of them playing on a Timbrel) in sight of their maisters and Dames to daunce for garlandes hanged thwart the streetes, which open pastimes in my youth, being now suppressed….[28]

The description, however, indicates that there was a decline in the popularity of physical waster and bucker training as well as of "games of defence" and "wrestlings" which the citizens "of olde time" had exercised more than those "of latter yeares," and instead, the indoor amusements had been increasing.[29] The decline was also caused by the appearance of the rapier in England between 1560 and 1580. William Camden's *Annales* states that it was introduced by Rowland Yorke who fought on the Spanish side

---

[28] John Stow, *A Suruay of London. Contayning the Originall, Antiquity, Increase, Moderne Estate, and Description of that Citie. With an Appendix, Containing in Latine, Libellum de situ Londini: Written by W. Fitzstephen, in the raigne of Henry the second*. (1598) F3^{v}.

[29] Stow F3^{v}.

in the Low Countries.[30] The new Continental thrusting sword with a long and thin blade lightened by grooves on its side does not require physical strength to be carried or handled, though, as Sydney Anglo reminds us, it was not the same weapon as that in the modern period.[31] Its light weight enhanced the popularization of wearing swords by civilians, which had not been the case for most of the medieval periods.[32]

In the 1615 edition of Stow's *Annales, or a Generall Chronicle of England*, Edmund Howes records the vogue in England:

> …until about the twelfe or thirtéenth yǽre of Quéen Elizabeth, the auncient English fight, of Sworde, and Buckler, was only had in use….
>
> For shortly after, began long Tucks, and long Rapiers, and hee was held the greatest Gallant, that had the déepest Ruffe, and longest Rapier….[33]

The description confirms Silver's lament for the period's rapid change in the style of fencing and, interestingly, both Silver and Howes explain the vogue for the rapier in

---

[30] William Camden, *Annales the True and Royall History of Elizabeth Queene of England*, Book 3 (1625) Ff4^{r}; Thomas Fuller cites the statement of Camden in his *History of the Worthies of England* (1662) Cccc2^{r}.

[31] Sydney Anglo, "How to Kill a Man at your Ease: Fencing Books and the Duelling Ethic," *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. Anglo (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990): 6.

[32] Anglo says that Baldassare Castiglione made a remark which suggests that a sword became a part of civilian clothing to the eye of a courtier. (Anglo, "How to Kill a Man": 3).

[33] John Stow and E. Howes, *The Annales, or a Generall Chronicle of England, Continued unto 1614* (Londini: Thomae Adams, 1615) Dddd2^{v}.

association with fashion: "Fencing… in this new fangled age, is like our fashions, euerie daye a change."[34] According to Howes, it was around 1570 when the tuck and the rapier came into use and it did not take long that, replacing the sword and buckler, the new sword along with the deep ruff became in fashion as symbolic belongings of a gallant. It was at the beginning of the seventeenth century when "the Italian rapier had quite displaced the sword as the normal weapon for civilian wear" in England.[35]

The lightness of the rapier stimulated the development of the elegant and fine fencing skill on the Continent, which attracted young English gentlemen and aristocrats soon after its introduction into England and caused the decline of the popularity of the traditional English style with sword and buckler or dagger.[36] The first historically significant book on swordsmanship of the new system is Camillo Agrippa's *Trattato di scientia d'arme*, which was first published at Rome in 1553 and has been reputed as an epoch-making book.[37] The peculiarity of Agrippa among other authors of old fencing books came from the fact that he was not a fencing master bound to the conventional method. He was known as a mathematician, architect and engineer, as well as a brawler, ruffian and friend of Michelangelo, and distinctly explored the art of fencing with his

---

[34] Silver, *Paradoxes* A3[r].
[35] J. D. Aylward, *The English Master of Arms: From the Twelfth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956) 74.
[36] Anglin 407.
[37] For a list of allusions to it in the seventeenth century, see Sydney Anglo, *The Martial Arts of Renaissance Europe* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000) 48.

scientific interest and approach to the problem of notation. He started to "encourage the application of geometrical figures and symbols" and to "suggest various experiments in, and improvements to, the purely representational recording of movement." [38] Furthermore, "the engineering principles underlying the movements of the human body when engaged in fencing"[39] is studied in his philosophical dialogue, so that he reached the conclusion that the cut is inferior to the thrust, from the assumption that while the former is "the more natural, that is, the easiest action," the latter is a more advanced skill because it is "the result of a complicated and carefully regulated combination of movements."[40] His intention to apply his mathematic and engineering knowledge to the art is clearly shown in the frontispiece to his book, where he is depicted discussing in an academic way, holding a pair of dividers and a spherical object, setting his foot upon a globe, and surrounded by several books, rulers, and hourglasses, but where we can find a sheathed sword worn by him as well as several other naked swords and daggers and one armoured gauntlet lying on the ground.

The attitude and belief in the interrelationship between mathematics and swordsmanship outlined by Agrippa continued to be investigated in Spain. It was supposed that the systematic fencing style was born in Spain, where, however, there was

[38] Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 48.
[39] Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 48.
[40] Castle 62.

little progress towards the practical use of the sword. Spanish masters were anxious to make the art a more mysterious science, "requiring for its practice a knowledge of geometry and natural philosophy, and whose principles were only explainable on metaphysical grounds."[41] Jeronimo de Carranza, who is regarded as the "inventor of the science of arms"[42] of the Spanish science, treats every kind of knowledge, such as mathematics, perspective, anatomy, medicine, astronomy, and music, as relevant to the art in a more elaborate way. As a result of it, his book, *Philosophía de las armas*, inevitably became huge and complicated, so that its excesses were ridiculed by Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas in his novel *El buscón*.[43] He also mocks a pupil of Carranza, Luis Pacheco de Narváez,[44] who was called Don Lewis in England. Narváez published the first of a series of works *Libro de las grandezas de la espada* at Madrid in 1600 about his master and his principles,[45] but unlike Carranza, who devotes more attention to the cut than to the thrust, he has a lot more to say about the thrust and the use of the point than the cut.

---

[41] Castle 95.
[42] Castle 97.
[43] Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 68, 72. See also Castle 97.
[44] Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 72.
[45] "...apart from the ancients, the only foreign authors whom he mentions in his works are Camillo Agrippa, the duelling engineer, and Federico Ghisliero whose own system was based upon circles, tangents and angles" (Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 71).

The two masters' system was "reduced to its absurdity in the seventeenth century by Girard Thibault d'Anvers"[46] in his *Académie de l'Espée* published in 1628 that contains a series of detailed drawings of fencing by Crispin van de Passe and the Elzevirs. The geometrical system explains the main principle of the attack using mathematically measured steps or movements of the foot and various compasses of the body. There are three kinds of "pasada," passes or paces, described in his book: the *pasada* is a pass of about twenty-four inches; the *pasada simple* of about thirty inches; and the *pasada doble* which is formed of the first two, and performed by the two feet alternately. Cuts are also divided into three according to compasses: the *arrebatar*, a cut with the whole arm from the shoulder; the *mediotajo*, from the elbow; and the *mandoble*, from the wrist, a flip of the point. And the same expressions as the cuts are applied to parries. Ultimately, all these minute distinctions became the butt of ridicule and parody.

In spite of the high reputation of Spaniards being dangerous duellists during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,[47] the complexity in the Spanish way of fighting "'by the book' of geometry, rather than of arithmetic,"[48] led to its decline on the Continent as well as in England. The rejection of the Spanish system in England can be

[46] A. Forbes Sieveking, "Fencing and Duelling," *Shakespeare's England: An Account of the Life and Manners of his Age*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966) 398.
[47] Castle 101.
[48] Sieveking 398.

related to "the decline of Spanish fashion and influence at Elizabeth's accession"[49] after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, though the Spaniard still remained to be much feared in England. According to A. Forbes Sieveking, it could also be because the English people did not take so long to discover the impracticality of the Spanish system of fighting.[50] Actually, Silver, who is assumed to have been "eager to study the principles of rapier-play"[51] laid down by Carranza and Narváez, makes contemptuous remarks about the Spanish style. He says that it is known for its too many "intricate trickes" which can hardly be learnt "in all the course of a mans life," "if they misse in doing the least of them in their fight, they are in danger of death," and ridicules that the continual movement of their feet was "as if they were in a dance."[52]

Ben Jonson also alludes in a flattering tone to the Spanish system of swordsmanship as well as these two acknowledged Spanish masters, Carranza and "Don Lewis," that is, Narváez. In the revised version of *Every Man in his Humour* published in 1616 in folio, Bobadilla, a very foolish gallant and braggart, using the technical terms of fencing, such as the "*stoccata*" (1.5.115) and the "*passada*: a most desperate thrust" (1.5.144), cries out that he will send "a *chartel*" (1.5.111), a challenge to a duel, with a sufficient justification "warranted by the great CARANZA" (1.5.112-13), and displays his

[49] Sieveking 398.
[50] Sieveking 398-99.
[51] Aylward 66.
[52] Silver, *Paradoxes* C3^{r-v}.

knowledge in the "mysterie" (1.5.117) to Matthew, the town-gull.[53] However, he humbly denies the rumour that he has "very rare, and vn-in-one-breath-vtter-able skill" (1.5.121) and says, "no, not I; no skill i' the earth: some small rudiments i' the science, as to know my time, distance, or so" (1.5.122-24). The intricate and impractical system is used as a convenient tool to express the would-be gallant's attribute.

In *The New Inn*, first performed in 1629, Jonson again makes some references to "*Don Lewis*." It seems that the name of the Spanish fencing master is celebrated when Sir Glorious Tipto, a knight and colonel, says that "*Don Lewis* of *Madrid*, is the sole Master / Now, of the world!" (2.5.88-89). However, it is also a way to suggest the personality of the speaker who "talkes vpon his tiptoes" (2.5.11) in a jesting way. Similarly, the characteristics of Fly, an inn parasite and former strolling gypsy, is expressed by his description of the "Euclidian" way of fencing: "He do's it all, by lines, and angles, *Colonel*, / By parallels, and sections, has his *Diagrammes*!" (2.5.92-93). Although he tries to distinguish the Euclidian way of fighting with the list of geometrical terms from the "*Spanish* way of *Don Lewis*" (2.5.78), these systems are in

[53] Quotations from all the works of Ben Jonson are taken from *Ben Jonson*, eds. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925-52) and references are to the same edition. *Every Man in his Humour* is in the 3rd volume of their edition. The abbreviations of the titles of Jonson are likewise those of Herford and Simpson.

fact identical.[54] Thus, Jonson, who seems to have been familiar with the Spanish system, "Geometrical or Euclidian School of Fencing"[55] and "*Don Lewis*," makes allusions to them both in accurate and inaccurate ways in order to depict the personalities of his characters in a comical way.

Similarly, references to such a geometrical method illustrate the foolery and cowardice of Onos or Lamprias, a very foolish traveller, and his Tutor in *The Queen of Corinth*, which was written in 1616 or 1617 in a collaboration among three playwrights, Philip Massinger, John Fletcher, and Nathan Field.[56] Onos, his guardian, Unckle, and his Tutor recently arrived from travel at Corinth. The Tutor who always tries to instruct the Continental manner of behaviour and the "Travellors posture" (1.3.16)[57] lists the proper causes of challenge in order for his pupil Onos to "ground it / On some such fundamentall base, or matter / As now the Gentry set their lives upon" (4.1.82-84):

TUTOR. ...or drawn your Sword,

Cry'd 'twas ill mounted? Has he given the lye

---

[54] Michael Hattaway, footnote to "No" (2.5.79), *The New Inn*, by Ben Jonson, ed. Hattaway (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984).
[55] Sieveking 397.
[56] Acts I and V were contributed by Philip Massinger, Act II by John Fletcher, and Acts III and IV by Nathan Field. (Robert Kean Turner, textual introduction, *The Queen of Corinth*, ed. Turner, *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992) 3.)
[57] Quotations from *The Queen of Corinth* are taken from *The Queen of Corinth*, ed. Robert Kean Turner, *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992).

In circle, or oblique, or semy-circle,

Or direct paralell? you must challenge him.

ONOS. He never gave my direct apparrell the lye in's life. (4.1.100-4)

The circular or oblique movements that he mentions are used as signs to show their foolishness. As is suggested by this dialogue between the swaggering Tutor and the idiotic pupil, the absurdity of the complicated ways of handling the weapon in the Spanish style came to be recognized among the English people in the period.

In contrast to the Spanish style, the Italian style of fencing found simplification the best way to perfection and gradually pervaded Europe. The Italian master, recognized as being "immeasurably superior in the practical art of killing his man," had made appearances in England under the patronage of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex and their system was enthusiastically adopted by the upper classes.[58]

Although it is assumed that other Continental manuals and masters were already known among Englishmen, the first publication in the English language on the martial art is the translation of the Italian fencing manual, *True Arte of Defence*, written by a Modenese fencing-master Giacomo di Grassi, originally published in Venice in 1570, translated by I. G[eronimo] Gentleman and published in London in 1594. Di Grassi is probably the first person who divided the blade into four equal parts: the first two parts

[58] Sieveking 399.

closest to the hilt stated as for defence, the third for the cut, and the last for the thrust.[59] He also considered the questions of "lines" of attack in fencing, inside, outside, high, and low.[60] Like Agrippa, he also uses mathematical knowledge to clarify the fundamental movements of swords, arms, and foot, which is shown by the dividers and hourglass depicted in the frontispiece of his book and "reasoned very clearly on the current theories of his time."[61] However, the treatise better known at that time was not his book but *Opera Nova* written by Achille Marozzo, a Bolognese master of arms. Anglo says that, "as far as surviving evidence is concerned, the first significant development in conveying technical information about fencing" came with the publication of Marozzo's book in 1536, which "discusses single combat… with every kind of weapon, 'with figures,'" that is, "eighty-two simple but clear woodcuts of the postures adopted by combatants fighting" with various weapons.[62] His manual had been so popular that five editions were published between 1537 and 1615.[63] Thomas Churchyard, the editor of the English version of Di Grassi's fencing manual, writes an excuse for selecting the book that the author is among "good writers" who "purchase

---

[59] Giacomo di Grassi, *Giacomo di Grassi his true arte of defence*, trans. I. G. gentleman (London, 1594) B1^{r-v}.
[60] Castle 70; Sieveking 399.
[61] Castle 72.
[62] Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 47.
[63] There is a reference to his name and book in Sir George Buck's *Third University of England* (Londini, 1615): "...for the moderne use, & estate thereof sée *Achilles Marrozzo* in his booke intituled *Arte dil'arme*" along with George Silver, Iacomo Modonese, Antonio Manciolino (Oooo2^{r}.)

small praise till they be dead" and then whose "Fame shal flowrish & bring foorth the fruite that long lay hid in the earth"; and commends the translation as "a volume in such apt termes & in so bigg a booke (besides the liuely descriptions & models of the same) that shews great knowledge & cunning, great art in the weapon, & great suretie of the man that wisely can vse it, & stoutly execute it."[64] Actually, Di Grassi introduced only a few improvements in the art, simply pursuing the tradition of the school of Marozzo, so that Castle claims that his achievement is inferior to Agrippa's.[65] However, the most significant point was not his achievement or improvement, but the fact that Di Grassi's book was much simpler than Marozzo's. The intelligibility of his method is also declared on the title page of the English translation: "his true Arte of Defence, plainlie teaching… the manner and forme how a man without other Teacher or Master may safelie handle all sortes of Weapons aswell offensiue as defensiue."[66]

Following the translation, there appeared a treatise written in English, Vincentio Saviolo's *Practice, In two bookes, The first intreating of the vse of the Rapier and Dagger, The second of Honor and honorable Quarrels*, published in 1595. Saviolo was a Paduan master of fencing who came to England after Rocco Bonnetti, the first master of the Italianate fencing style in the country who made his appearance in London in

[64] Thomas Churchyard, commendation, *Giacomo di Grassi his true arte of defence*, by Di Grassi, trans. I. G. gentleman (London, 1594) ¶2^{r-v}.
[65] Castle 72-73.
[66] Di Grassi ¶1^{r}.

1569 and "taught the Noblemen & Gentlemen of the Court" to be "verie much beloued in the Court."[67] Silver reports that Saviolo, being much favoured by the English people like the predecessor, "taught Rapier-fight at the Court, at *London*, and in the countrey, by the space of seauen or eight yeares or thereabouts."[68] As is recorded by the rival English master, he gained great popularity among upper class people, so that he was convinced to write the treatise. He declares that he has "endeuoured to expresse in this discourse, and to make plain by pictures all the skill and knowledge which I haue in this art,"[69] though Anglo points out the latter half of his claim is not literally true as "the six woodcuts which disfigure his text are execrable and notationally useless."[70] The author further claims in the discourse that:

> I haue changed fiue or six sundry maner of plaies, taught me by diuerse masters, and reduced them vnto one by my no little labour and paine, and in this will I resolue you, and geue you therein so direct a rule and instruction, as that therby... you may attain vnto the perfect knowledge of this science.[71]

---

[67] Silver, *Paradoxes* I4^{v}-K1^{r}.
[68] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{v}.
[69] Saviolo B2^{r}.
[70] Anglo, *The Martial Arts* 53.
[71] Saviolo B4^{v}.

Indeed, well acquainted with both Italian and Spanish systems of fencing both of which he formulated into one system of fencing, he is able to "demonstrate the most usual practices without the mysterious tracing of diagrams, circles, chords, and tangents, so dear to authors of the continental schools."[72] While he dealt with the cut with the use of the edge to a great extent attempting to adjust to the liking and mode of fighting in England where he taught, he obviously followed the presupposition that the thrust with the use of the point is superior to the cut.

The Italian system was enthusiastically adopted by the court. The success of these Continental masters in the court was partly due to their continuous efforts to differentiate themselves from the local masters, which are suggested both in Saviolo's *Practice* and Silver's "A Briefe Note of Three Italian Teachers of Offence" at the end of *Paradoxes of Defence*. For instance, Rocco Bonnetti, one of the Italian teachers whom Silver records as "Signior Rocko," shows a clear intention to differentiate his place in teaching the Continental style of fencing from English schools of arms. For Bonnetti, to spread the Italianate system of fencing was not his initial purpose for travel to England, but he came as part of a diplomatic mission from Catherine de' Medici to "report upon the attitude of the English public towards her project of arranging a marriage between

[72] Castle 115.

the Queen and the Duc d' Anjou, afterwards Henri III,"[73] as Aylward points out. However, when encountering a financial problem, he decided to teach the Italian style of fencing to noblemen and gentlemen of the court taking advantage of his personal connections with the court as a way to acquire an income. He opened a school of Continental fencing skill in London around 1576.[74] The first step he took was to make the outward appearance of his place rich and suitable for the pupils of upper classes. Notwithstanding his fiscal stringency, he paid out a great sum of money for the lease of a "faire house"[75] as Silver precisely reports. The arms and armour, such as rapiers, daggers, gloves of mail and gauntlets, of "all the Noblemens and Gentlemens armes that were his Schollers"[76] were displayed about the house and its interior was also luxuriously furnished and equipped:

> …he had benches and stooles, the roome being verie large, for Gentlemē to sit round about his Schoole to behold his teaching…. And because all things should be verie necessary for the Noblemē & gentlemē, he had in his school a large square table, with a greene carpet, done round with a

[73] Aylward 40.
[74] Aylward says "it is quite definite that, in 1576, he bought from Lyly... the remainder of the lease of a large paved hall in the former monastery of the Blackfriars, together with a lodging which had formerly been that of the conventual butler. This lease had been presented to Lyly in 1554 by his patron, the Earl of Oxford. The premises had already been used as a fence school by William Joyner, perhaps the best known of the Four Ancient Masters of his time." (Aylward 41)
[75] Silver, *Paradoxes* I4^{v}.
[76] Silver, *Paradoxes* I4^{v}.

> verie brode rich fringe of gold, always standing vpon it a verie faire Standish couered with Crimson Veluet, with inke, pens, pin-dust, and sealing waxe, and quiers of verie excellent fine paper gilded, readie for the Noblemen & Gentlemen (vpon occasion) to write their letters, being then desirous to follow their fight, to send their men to dispatch their businesse. And to know how the time passed, he had in one corner of his schoole a Clocke, with a verie faire large Diall…[77]

Silver's detailed explanation of the interior and exterior, which is ironically one of the few significant records about the building for such institutions of the period, expresses how astonishing and impressive it was for the eyes of his contemporaries. Additionally, Bonnetti called the magnificently decorated house "his Colledge, for he thought it great disgrace for him to keepe a Fence-schoole, he being then thought to be the onely famous Maister of the Art of armes in the whole world" and charged an exorbitant tutorial fee, no less than "twentie, fortie, fifty, or an hundred pounds," to all of his students.[78] Silver's descriptions on the pompous appearance of his "Colledge," the extremely expensive fee, and his lofty attitude indicates how hard Bonnetti as a

[77] Silver, *Paradoxes* I4^{v}-K1^{r}.
[78] Silver, *Paradoxes* I4^{v}.

gentleman of Italy intended to draw a clear distinction between his “Colledge” and other English fence-schools.

The lease was most probably inherited by Jeronimo, whom Silver mentions as the second Italian master. According to Aylward, he was a son of Bonnetti rather than his boy. He could keep using the premises as his “Colledge,” which Saviolo joined in 1590.[79] Brought up in England, Jeronimo did not show a strong contempt for the English teachers, though he insisted that the Italianate method was superior over the English one. On the other hand, Saviolo, a professional master of the sword unlike Bonnetti, more explicitly showed his disdain for English roughness and rudeness as well as their method without science of the art, as cited at the beginning of this chapter. Even though these continental masters seem to be arrogant or even ridiculous, making a visible differentiation from the local schools was a crucial procedure so as to appeal English nobles as well as to avoid inheriting the established bad reputation of the traditional English fencing schools which was considered as a place of teaching effective ways of killing or injuring people to vagabonds or assassins.

The following excerpt of dialogue between “V” standing for Vincentio Saviolo and his scholar “L” suggests the general opinion about the English schools and the behaviour of its teachers then:

[79] Aylward 50-51.

L. Shew me... what may bee the cause, why this arte (being so necessaarie and noble) is of so many so little esteemed?

V. You haue moued a question whereof I am grieued to speake, when I consider with my selfe the slight account wherein this so worthy science is held, I deeme the cause hereof to be either because many which doo (peraduenture) vnderstand the same will not professe to teach it, or that many (hauing in deed no vnderstanding thereof) doe iudge the same to consist in theyr great strength and brauing courage, but they deceiue themselues. Moreouer, I am of this opinion, that many (not knowing this art to be the beginning and foundation of the art Militarie) doe therefore neglect and contemne it, because they esteeme the same to bee a thing vnto them altogether impertinent.[80]

Lamenting the light estimation of the "worthy science," he attributes the cause to the lack of an adequate knowledge about it among teachers in England who depend upon their sheer power and bravery in their fight and behave in a rough and rude way so that their art came to be neglected or condemned as one for ill-mannered people. Rejecting all these English ways, Saviolo tried to instruct more "noble" ways of fighting and published *His Practice*. Consequently, the "Colledge" of the Continental art of the

[80] Saviolo C1^{r}.

sword gradually came to be regarded as a place where they instructed the elegant skill of handling a fashionable weapon much approved by young noblemen and gentlemen.

English teachers of the sword naturally expressed their indignation against the new sword and fencing skill claiming its weakness and impracticality on the battle-field. Silver is a typical Englishman who jealously asserts the great advantages of the traditional English weapons and style of fencing over the latest Continental ones. His *Paradoxes of Defence* starts with his claim that he has "the perfect knowledge of all maner of weapõs" and is "experiẽced in all maner of fights" so that he can perceive "the great abuses by the *Italian* Teachers of Offence done vnto them, the great errors, inconueniences, & false resolutions they haue brought them into."[81] Criticizing their way of fighting for its weakness and trickery, he comments that the self-resolutions and vain opinions of rapier-men made them in danger of death in their fight.[82] Furthermore, he mentions Saviolo's *Practice* as a book where he found "neither true rule for the perfect teaching of true fight, not true ground of true fight, neither sence or reason for due proofe thereof."[83] He even claims that in the fight with long rapiers and poniards between two valiant men, "the one hauing skill, and the other none," the man with no skill has a greater advantage over the other one, for the skilful man considers too much

[81] Silver, *Paradoxes* B1^{r}.
[82] Silver, *Paradoxes* B4^{v}.
[83] Silver, *Paradoxes* K3^{v}.

and too long about the proper stance taught by the schoolmaster to compete with the unskilful man who "presently redoubleth or reuiueth his spirits with perfect resolution, to make short worke, couragiously with some offensiue action, such as nature shall best yeeld vnto him, flieth in with all force and agilitie."[84]

Naturally, this trend had aroused challenges against Italian masters by English teachers in order to prove their strengths. In most cases, they were just ignored, for Italians considered it as a rather nobler attitude to avoid such fighting. Nonetheless, Silver reports several fights in which three Italian masters, Bonnetti, Jeronimo, and Saviolo, were involved and his description also records the appearance and behaviour of English masters and the attitude of Italians.

First of all, Silver introduces an English swordman, Austen Bagger, who successfully challenged Bonnetti. He is described as if he were an ideal fencer from the English fencer's perspective: "a verie tall gentleman of his handes, not standing much vpon his skill, but carying the valiant hart of an Englishman, vpon a time being merrie amongst his friends."[85] His reputation as a "tall" man, that signifies a man valiant and

[84] Silver, *Paradoxes* H1^{r-v}.

[85] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{r}. The description of the sturdy frame and large stature of each English fencer who challenged foreign fencing teachers shows the physical feature of a fencer that Silver conceives as ideal and presumably opposing Saviolo's idea that the man "small of stature and weake of strength" with the skill of the art will "subdue and ouercome the fierce brauing pride of tall and strong bodies" with no skill (Saviolo B1^{v}).

good at arms,[86] is established not by cunning skill but by the brave spirit for sword fighting of an Englishman. Bagger, standing with the sword and buckler ready outside of the window of his house in the Blackfriars, addressed provocative remarks, which presumably represented the feeling of most of the English teachers:

> *Signior Rocco*, thou that art thought to be the onely cunning man in the world with thy weapon, thou that takest vpon thee to hit anie Englishman with a thrust vpon anie button, thou that takest vpon thee to come ouer the seas, to teach the valiant Noblemen and Gentlemen of *England* to fight, thou cowardly fellow come out of thy house if thou dare for thy life, I am come to fight with thee….[87]

Invoked by it, Bonnetti rushed to go out with his two hand swords drawn to fight. According to Silver, Bagger soundly beat his opponent but mercifully spared his life, though Aylward examines that "Silver beclouds the issue; on the whole, it looks as if Rocco had the best of it."[88] Silver continues that "This was the first and last fight that euer *Signior Rocco* made, sauing once at Queene Hith he drew his Rapier vpon a waterman, where he was throughly beaten with Oares and Stretchers."[89] He intended to prove Bonnetti's cowardice and weakness enumerating these instances of his shameful

[86] "Tall," def., *a*. A.3, *OED*.
[87] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{r}.
[88] Aylward 43.
[89] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{v}.

fights, but actually, he shunned most of such provocations with his self-control, for it seemed to be a great disgrace for him, the Italian gentleman, even to recognize the middle class English teachers as his adversaries.

The cases of Jeronimo and Saviolo follow Bonnetti's. Resentful of the disgracing words against Englishmen, Silver himself with his brother Toby Silver made a challenge against them with the various weapons, which were "the single Rapier, Rapier and Dagger, the single Dagger, the single Sword, the Sword and Target, the Sword and Buckler, & two hand Sword, the Staffe, battell Axe, and Morris Pike."[90] They printed five or six score, that is 100 or 120, Bills of Challenge to be posted from Southwark to the Tower and from the Tower throughout London to Westminster.[91] However, to their disappointment, the Italians never made their appearance to the appointed place "within a bow shot of their Fence schoole," so that many "gentlemen of good accompt" were dispatched to them to persuade them for their honour into coming to the site but in vain.[92]

Although Silver regards their absence as a result of their cowardice and fear, Aylward examines that especially Saviolo, lamenting the English masters' obstinate refusal to modernize their methods without science, "would not take up the foils with

[90] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{v}-K2^{r}.
[91] Silver, *Paradoxes* K1^{v}.
[92] Silver, *Paradoxes* K2^{r}.

them because he felt that his knowledge gave him an unfair advantage over them."[93] Even though it were the case, however, it appears that they had lost their reputation to some extent among the English people until they had a fight against the English masters of Defence two or three days after the event. According to Silver, the Englishmen drinking in an ale house in London near Saviolo's school discovered the Italians' passing by and prayed them to drink together, but the Italian masters, instead of answering their request, drew their rapiers being "verie cowardly" and "afraid" so that they were almost slain unless it had not been intervened.[94] Even if Silver distorted or exaggerated the facts, the rest of his report suggests that they took their best advantage of this incidence to regain their reputation in the court:

> The next morning after, all the Court was filled, that the *Italian* teachers of Fence had beaten all the maisters of Defence in *London*, who set vpon them in a house together. This wan the *Italian* Fencers their credit againe, and thereby got much, still continuing their false teaching to the end of their liues.[95]

According to this, it was rumoured that the Italian masters defeated all English masters who attacked them in the ale house. No matter whether this rumour was correct or not,

---

[93] Aylward 51.
[94] Silver, *Paradoxes* K2^{r}.
[95] Silver, *Paradoxes* K2^{r}.

Saviolo was highly regarded as a stout fencing teacher enjoying popularity while he lived, so that he was required to issue forth *His Practice*.

Silver introduces two more Englishmen who attempted to or did fight with the two Italians. One of them is Bartholomew Bramble, whom Silver praises as "a verie tall man both of his hands and person, who kept a schoole of Defence."[96] Saviolo was boasting among gentlemen of account in Wells in Somerset that "he had bene thus manie yeares in *England*, and since the time of his first comming, there was not yet one Englishman, that could once touch him at the single Rapier, or Rapier and Dagger."[97] Resenting this bragging, an Englishman who happened to be present sent a message to Bramble. Saviolo's despising and scornful way of speech and behaviour enraged the English teacher to strike him down. When Bramble came to challenge Saviolo, the Italian, laying his hand on his dagger and pointing at it, said, "I will cause to lie in the Gaile for this geare, 1. 2. 3. 4. yeares,"[98] but did not fight according to his principle. On the next day, Saviolo blamed Bramble for the ill-treatment of him but mercifully offered instruction in the way of thrusting "two foote further then anie Englishmen" and bought a dozen of best silken "Pointes" at a mercer.[99]

---

[96] Silver, *Paradoxes* K2^{v}.
[97] Silver, *Paradoxes* K2^{v}.
[98] Silver, *Paradoxes* K3^{r}.
[99] Silver, *Paradoxes* K3^{v}.

Silver writes about another Englishmen, a certain Cheese, who had a fight with Jeronimo and described as "a verie tall man, in his fight naturall English, for he fought with his Sword and Dagger, and in Rapier-fight had no skill at all."[100] As for Jeronimo, Silver calls him valiant because, unlike Saviolo, he did not avoid the challenge made by Cheese, fought with the rapier and dagger putting himself "into his best ward or *Stocata*, which ward was taught by himselfe and *Vincentio*, and by them best allowed of, to be the best ward to stand vpon in fight for life," but Jeronimo was slain with the opponent's sword within two thrusts.[101] However, such challenges from the middle-class English fencers were mostly ignored with scorn and contempt by the teachers of the upper class and these attacks against Italians could not reverse the trend towards the rapier and the Continental way of fencing. As Aylward says, the decreasing popularity is also suggested by the failure of the publishing of Silver's *Brefe Introductions vpõ my Paradoxes of Defence*, probably written after 1605, for "his publisher may have doubted the appeal of an unfashionable creed."[102]

The change in the fashion of the sword is also suggested in some literary works of the period. In Henry Porter's *The Pleasant History of the Two Angrie Women of*

---

[100] Silver, *Paradoxes* K4^{v}.
[101] Silver, *Paradoxes* K4^{v}.
[102] Aylward 69. Although Colonel Matthey assumes *Brefe Introduction* was written shortly after the *Paradoxes* (Cyril G. R. Matthey, introduction, *The Works of George Silver*, by George Silver, ed. Matthey (London: George Bell and Sons, 1898) vi), Aylward claims it was not before 1605.

Abington first performed in 1598, there appears a sturdy Englishman, Dick Coomes, who calls himself "the flower of smithfield for a sword"[103] and laments the lowering quality of swords and the decline of the fight with the sword and buckler. He says that he used to have "a right Fox,"[104] a high-quality sword with "[t]he old Passau swordsmith's stamp of a running wolf, known in Spain as the Perillo (or dog), and in England as the fox,"[105] and "it would haue cried twang,"[106] which signifies the English fighting style with blows unlike the rapier fight with thrusts. He then continues:

> but a dogge hath his day, tis gone, and there are few good ones made now, I see by this dearth of good swords, that dearth of sword and Buckler fight, begins to grow out, I am sorry for it, I shall neuer see good manhood againe, if it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come vp then, then a man, a tall man, & a good sword and buckler man, will be spitted like a Cat or a cunney, then a boy will be as good as a man, vnlesse the Lord shew mercie vnto vs, well, I had as lieue be hanged as liue to see that day, wel mistres, what shal I do? what shal I do?[107]

---

[103] Henry Porter, *The Pleasant History of the Two Angrie Women of Abington* (London, 1599) E3^{r}.
[104] Porter E3^{r}.
[105] Viscount Dillon, "Armour and Weapons," *Shakespeare's England: An Account of the Life and Manners of his Age*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966) 134.
[106] Porter E3^{r}.
[107] Porter E3^{r-v}.

Marianne Brish Evett says that the references to the new vogue where the sword and buckler fight were supplanted by the rapier and dagger fight are clues to date the play to around 1598. These references are "not impossible before 1590, but are less likely then, since the sword and buckler was the accepted weapon for serving men into the 1600's" and it was in 1599 when Silver published his claim "that sword and buckler fight is not only the most effective style of combat but the only true, English, manly system," which reminds one of Coomes' speech.[108]

It appears that all Dick Coomes' nostalgia and defence for "a tall man" with a sword and buckler concerning the lamentable future attracted little sympathy and rather sounded ridiculous and laughable. Responding to his emotional question, Mistress Goursey requires him to help her revenge against Mistress Barnes. He was easily persuaded to "strike a woman" by her saying that "she is mankind, therefore thou maist strike her."[109] Thus, the dialogue also suggests how these "gallants" were regarded in the period: the manliness they insist on was found violent, rude and ridiculous belonging to men of the lower classes like Coomes. Additionally, the term "sword and buckler" on its own came to signify the antiquated or as an antonym for the "present" in "The Induction on the Stage" of Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*: "neyther to looke backe to

[108] Marianne Brish Evett, introduction, *The Two Angry Women of Abington: A Critical Edition*, by Henry Porter, ed. Evett (New York: Garland, 1980) 26.
[109] Porter E3^{v}.

the sword and buckler-age of *Smithfield*, but content himselfe with the present" (Induction 116-17).

Di Grassi states that the rapier as "a weapon more vsuall for Gentlemens wearing, and fittest for causes of offence and defence: Besides that, in Italie where Rapier and Dagger is commonly worne and vsed, the Sworde (if it be not an arming Sworde) is not spoken of."[110] The new weapon was regarded to be suitable for gentlemen and fashionable as is implied by the fact that Italians commonly wore it. Furthermore, it mentions the change in the style of fighting:

> The Sworde and Buckler fight was long while allowed in England (and yet practise in all sortes of weapons in praiseworthie,) but now being layd downe, the sword but with Seruing-men is not much regarded, and the Rapier fight generally allowed, as a weapon because most perilous, therefore most feared, and thereupon priuate quarrels and common frayes soonest shunned.[111]

The sword and buckler, weapons for the old-fashioned fight which used to be popular for a long time, came to be esteemed as ones only for serving men at that time. A similar understanding is expressed in the title of William Bas's play, *Sword and Buckler, or,*

[110] Di Grassi ¶¶1^{r}.
[111] Di Grassi ¶¶1^{v}.

Seruing-Mans Defence, and in a phrase in it, "our ancient Sword and Buckler."[112] Besides, the rapier was no more placed as a weapon ineffective but as one most dangerous, horrifying and, therefore, most effective.

In the seventeenth century, we can see that even an English fencing master, Joseph Swetnam, believes in the superiority of the rapier and dagger to the sword and buckler. In *The Schoole of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence*, he asserts that those who insist on the uselessness of the skill in handling of a weapon are "a sort of logger-headed asses" and their opinion that "a man with a sword will cut off thy rapier at one blow" is "a most cowardly kind of ignorãce," for once the man of skill holds a rapier, a hundred blows with a sword cannot do any harm to him.[113] In comparison with the old weapon laid "rusty in a corner," the rapier is "the newest fashion of weapons" desired by everyone, seems to be more dangerous and deadly to the enemy than the old, and is "the finest & the comeliest weapõ that euer was vsed in *England*, for so much cunning to this weapon belongeth as to no weapon the like."[114] In this way, sophisticated skill rather than sheer strength came to be regarded as a great asset and the rapier and the Continental fencing style enjoyed increasing popularity. Accordingly, the foreign terms of fencing were introduced into the English language. For example, we

[112] William Bas, *Sword and Buckler, or, Seruing-Mans Defence* (1609) B4^{r}.
[113] Joseph Swetnam, *The Schoole of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence* (1617) B2^{r}.
[114] Swetnam D4^{r-v}.

can find a lot of allusions to them in Shakespeare's works, such as foin, venue, stoccata, or puncto.

The rapid change in fashion and reputation made it possible to depict dramatic characters according to different social status and generations through their weapons in the opening scene of *Romeo and Juliet*, which Sieveking analyzes as "a perfect epitome of the cause and materials for fighting, of the quarrels that arose, and of the weapons used in their liquidation in Shakespeare's days."[115] The weapons of Sampson and Gregory, servants of the house of Capulet, are specified as "swords and bucklers" (1.1.0 s.d.) in a stage direction of the second, third, and fourth Quartos, whereas the weapon that Old Capulet asks to give in the brawl scene is his "long sword" (1.1.68) which stresses his stately position as well as his old age, as his wife scornfully responds to his demand saying, "A crutch, a crutch—why call you for a sword?" (1.1.69). The too heavy and cumbersome weapon to compete with the rapier similarly signifies the oldness of Justice Shallow in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* when a "long sword" (*Wiv*. 2.1.198) is given to him in his boast of his "mad" youth.

On the other hand, though there is no reference to it, the rapier is supposed to be the sword of Tybalt who is most probably a duellist in the Continental style, as Mercutio sarcastically mentions it:

---

[115] Sieveking 394.

> …O, he's the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing pricksong: keeps time, distance, and proportion. He rests his minim rests: one, two, and the third in your bosom; the very butcher of a silk button. A duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house of the first and second cause. Ah, the immortal *passado*, the *punto reverso*, the *hai*. (2.3.17-23)

This description is filled with a lot of the allusions to the Continental fencing style, such as the musical analogy with duelling, its geometrical ways of fighting, and new terms of fencing, "*passado*," "*punto reverso*." Further, the phrase "the very butcher of a silk button" reminds us of the provocative remark of Austen Bagger. All these expressions suggest that Tybalt is regarded as a fencer in a new Continental style and, therefore, his sword is most likely to be a rapier. The latest rapier was understood to be a weapon possessed particularly by the young noble and did not belong to those of lower degrees nor even to the noble of only one generation earlier. In addition to all these swords, "Clubs, bills, and partisans" (1.1.66) are symbolically given to officers. In this way, the age and social status of the people involved in the brawl are quite expressively represented through their weapons.

Fig. 5 The soldier with a long sword. A woodcut in Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577) f7^{r}.

Its changing fashion and function was also reflected in the representation of the long blade. In Medieval times, there existed the long sword, a gigantic bladed weapon which requires both hands to handle it, as we can see in a woodcut of Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* published in 1577 [see fig.5]. Though it could have been used on the battle-field, it is more likely that its primary functions were rather symbolical than practical. It symbolized the high social status of the owner, as was pointed out above, as well as his excessive physical strength to manipulate such a huge sword. It was, however, easily connected to roughness. Indeed, this idea is shown in the illustration of the weapons in William Harrison's "Description of England," as part of the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*. It describes the weapons that "desperate cutters," cutthroats or highway- robbers, usually carry as:

> two daggers or two rapiers in a sheath alwaies about them, wherewith in euerie dronken fraie they are knowen to worke much mischiefe; their swords & daggers also are of a great length, and longer than the like vsed in anie other countrie, whereby ech one pretendeth to haue the more aduantage of his enimie.[116]

These rogues preferred weapons of a great length, for the longer the blade, the more dangerous and advantageous it looked and it represented the physical strength of its owner. The reference to the swords being long may not necessarily make them "long swords," but it could signify "long rapiers." However, it is more likely that those highway-robbers carried in 1587, the year when Harrison's "Description of England" was published, were "long swords" or at least longer broad swords rather than long rapiers, because rapiers were popular only among upper class youths at the moment, which is described in the first scene of *Romeo and Juliet*, which was written in 1595, as explained beforehand. In association with these highway-robbers' violent behaviours, Harrison sarcastically introduces their understanding of these cumbersome weapons.

The vogue of a more elegant and lighter sword, the rapier, brought a new phase in the representation of a long blade. The thin and light sword unlike the long sword did

---

[116] William Harrison, "The Description and Historie of England," *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles*, by Raphael Holinshed (1587) S3^{r}.

not require a physical power to be carried and handled, but another quality, fencing skill. It was the fine skill that was needed for its owner to manipulate the weapon properly and make himself more advantageous and dangerous in sword fighting. The preference for a rapier with a longer blade was thus correlated with the development and popularization of the latest fencing style. The lighter sword which was much easier to be worn rather aroused a craze for an excessively long blade. Its owner could pretend to be skilful with the long rapier and "haue the more aduantage of his enimie" by just wearing it.

There are, of course, those who objected to this taste in the period. Silver, as part of his assertion of the superiority of traditional English fencing, claims for the advantage of the "ancient" short sword over the long sword or the long rapier with no hilt for defence and with no idea of the perfect lengths of weapons, without which "no man can by nature or Art against the perfect lēgth fight safe."[117] He scornfully reports the belief in a great advantage of the sword longer than the other for it was believed to be certain that "an inch will kill a man…."[118] He tries to persuade the reader with two drawings that the proper length decided according to each man's stature will make the fighter "able, doe his vttermost," and "fight safe,"[119] and that the short sword was the perfect

[117] Silver, *Paradoxes* B2^{v}.
[118] Silver, *Paradoxes* C2^{r}.
[119] Silver, *Paradoxes* E1^{r}.

good weapon especially in service of the Prince, for it is more manoeuvrable and easier to manipulate.[120] Similarly, John Smythe insists on the incapability of the rapier with a blade of one yard and a quarter long, comparing it with the strong short arming sword which had been traditionally preferred in wars. According to him, the best length is below three quarters of a yard or a yard at most, so the rapier is too long and "so narrow, and of so small substance, and made of a verie hard temper to fight in priuat fraies."[121]

In spite of these objections, the belief in the advantage of the longer blade came to be dominant. Therefore, to measure the lengths of blades for a fair fight was deemed to represent the job of the umpire in a duel. For example, Shallow's remark that "My merry Host hath had the measuring of their weapons" (*Wiv*. 2.1.180-81) signifies that the Host was appointed referee. It is why Hamlet asks Osric, "These foils have all a length?" (*Ham.*5.2.203), when examining weapons for the match with Laertes. Additionally, it is recorded in *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* that Jonson declares his sword was ten inches shorter than that of his fellow-actor, Gabriel Spencer who quarrelled and fought a duel with Jonson to be killed by him on 22nd September, 1598 at Hoxton Fields (246-49). This claim is shown as evidence of the aggressiveness and advantage of Spencer.

---

120 Silver, *Paradoxes* F1r.
121 John Smythe, *Certain Discourses* (London, 1590) B4r.

In this line of thinking, the trend toward the longer sword caused regulations on the length of blades. However, in examining such regulations, it will be recognized that there is a gradual decline in the governmental interest in regulating the length of the blade. This decline can be interpreted to signify the change in meaning and function of the sword in society. The last part of this chapter intends to follow these changes through a chronological examination of royal proclamations that concern weaponry. The first of these proclamations appeared on 17th of March in 1557, issued by Philip and Mary:

> The King and Queen's most excellent majesties, understanding how that divers naughty and insolent persons have now of late attempted to make quarrels, riots, and frays as well in churches and churchyards (contrary to the laws and statutes in that case provided) as in sundry other places, cities, towns, and markets; and for the accomplishment of their naughty purposes and quarrels have caused swords and rapiers to be made of a much greater length than heretofore hath been accustomed or is decent to use and wear….
>
> Their highnesses, minding to take away the occasion of such mischiefs and disorders, do straightly charge and command all and singular their

> justices of peace, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, and other their majesties' ministers and officers… that from henceforth no person or persons, of what estate or condition soever he or they be, do use or wear by night or by day, nor sell, any sword or rapier above the length of a yard and a half-quarter in the blade at the most….[122]

The first part of it writes about swords and rapiers of an excessive length clearly associating them with violent behaviour and crimes of unruly people in society. Then, it comes to the limitation of the length aiming at the prevention of crimes with these lengthy bladed swords in the realm, which was the sole purpose specified in this proclamation.

Similarly, the danger of the long blade is mentioned as a purpose of its limitation in the so-called "Sumptuary Laws," but at the same time, another aspect of swords as an ornamental element gradually comes to be featured. "Sumptuary Laws" are royal proclamations that generally attempt to regulate habits of consumption according to the various social classes and wealth in order to preserve the hierarchical order and morals of the society. As for weapons, there are seven proclamations from 1562 to 1596 which restrict the length of the blade and determine what type of ornaments on weapons are

[122] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, vol. 2 (London: Yale UP, 1969) 73-74.

allowed to be worn by whom. It seems probable that these regulations were firstly stated for the prevention of death or severe injury with the long bladed weapon. Looking back at the description about the gallants' preference for long blades and deep ruffs in the 1615 edition of Stow's *Annales*, it is further reported that this vogue caused Elizabeth I to state regulations against both of them, because the "déepest Ruffe" is the "offence to the Eye of the one" and the "longest Rapier" the "hurt unto the life of the Subject"; and that she placed "Selected graue Cittizens, the euery Gate to cut the Ruffes, and breake the Rapiers poynts, of all passengers that excéeded a yeard in length, of their Rapiers, & a nayle of a yeards in depth of their Ruffes."[123] Even though the juxtaposition with ruffs connotes the changing function of the sword to an ornamental accessory, the principal focus of the regulation was apparently on the lethality of the long rapier at the outset.

The first of the "Sumptuary Laws" containing a rule about swords is the proclamation announced on 6th of May in 1562 issued in the name of Elizabeth I. It decrees two different types of regulations on weaponry; first, that no man "being under the degree of a knight" shall wear weapons with ornamental elements, such as "gilted spurs," "any damasking, or gilt sword, rapier, or dagger"[124]; and second, it limits the length of the blade to which much more space is devoted compared to the other:

[123] Stow and Howes Dddd2v.
[124] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 190.

> the usage of them can not tend to defense… but to murder and evident death…: her majesty's pleasure is that no man shall… wear any sword, rapier, or any weapon in their stead, passing the length of one yard and half a quarter of blade at the uttermost, neither any dagger above the length of twelve inches in blade, neither any buckler with a sharp point or with any point above two inches of length…[125]

It is noteworthy that it does not mention the social class or the wealth of the wearer, but simply says "no man" is entitled to wear a weapon with an excessively long blade and allows no exception. The length of the weapon is similarly regulated in two other proclamations by Elizabeth I, which are the one issued on 12th February in 1566, that does not refer to the gilt or damasking on the weapon,[126] and the one on 12th February in 1580.[127] They seem to indicate that the main concern of the authority was about crime prevention rather than disorder in the status of apparel. It can be interpreted that it was a pressing necessity to regulate the length of the blade, as Charles Edelman

[125] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 191.
[126] It also states that the purpose of the statement is connected to schools of fence that "teach the multitude of the common people to play at all kind of weapons." (Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 282.)
[127] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 462.

examines that the "sudden 'affray', or brawl… was such a part of everyday Elizabethan life that the Queen issued more than one proclamation in an attempt to stamp it out."[128]

It appears, however, that the first regulation did not function as effectively as intended, which is suggested by repeated issues of these laws. It is true that there is a record of a case where such orders were applied even to an important persona, a French ambassador, in a document written by Lord Talbot to the Earl of Shrewsbury on 23rd of June 1580, which is immediately after the proclamation in 1580 was announced:

> The French Ambassador, Monsieur Malvoisier, riding to take the air, in his return came through Smithfield; and there, at the bars, was stayed by those officers that sit to cut swords, by reason his rapier was longer than the statute. He was in a great fury, and drew his rapier; in the mean season my Lord Henry Seymour came, and so stayed the matter.[129]

Although it may suggest that the regulation was strictly executed,[130] there is more likeliness that it was not properly obeyed. The special council orders published by the Justice of Peace in Surrey on 12th May 1580 hints at the state of violating them: "divers persones… doe offende in wearinge swords, &c., of excessive length."[131] Harrison also

---

[128] Edelman 17.
[129] Edmund Lodge, *Illustrations of British History*, vol. 2 (1791) 168.
[130] Sieveking 391.
[131] John Roche Dasent, ed, *Acts of the Privy Council of England: New Series*, vol. 12 (London, 1896) 11. Even in the document dedicated to Prince Charles in 1617,

says, “manie orders haue béene taken for the intollerable length of these weapons; so I sée as yet small redresse.”[132] Furthermore, there is an example of a rapier with an extending blade [see fig.6] which was invented as a loophole of the law: it could both comply with the standard of the arms control and satisfy the owner’s enthusiasm for the long blade by changing its length freely.

Fig. 6. An extending rapier, German, about 1590. Leeds Royal Armoury Museum. Leeds. Personal photograph by author. 26 May 2009.

Whether it was properly obeyed or not, a series of similar regulations on the length tells us that there was a gradual shift of its focus from preventing crime with a longer sword to controlling the excess of the ornamental element on it. The description concerning the length in the proclamation of 1580 is just a repetition of that of 1566, and there is no reference to this matter in those of 1574, 1588, and 1597. Contrary to that, more space came to be devoted to describing restraint in the use of ornamental

---

Swetnam takes no account of the limit of the length in the proclamation. He recommends the rapier of “a reasonable length” which should be “rather too long then too short, foure foote at the least, except thine enemie doe giue or send thee the length of his weapon.” (Swetnam E3^{v}).

[132] Harrison S3^{r}.

elements on weapons according to social status, which have nothing to do with crime prevention. The proclamation on 15th of June in 1574 by Elizabeth I clarifies the restriction of the wearers of some items including "scabbards of swords, daggers, etc." and of "spurs, swords, rapiers, daggers, skeans, woodknives, or hangers, buckles of girdles, gilt, silvered, or damasked: except knights and barons' sons, and others of higher degree or place…."[133] In 1580, this regulation was more precisely divided accordingly; "damasked: under the degree of a knight of the order, one of the Privy Council, a gentleman of the privy chamber; gilt, under the degree of a knight; silvered, under the degrees and persons before mentioned,"[134] though no such precise division was set in 1597.[135]

It can be interpreted that the decrease in the interest in regulating the length in the later issued "Sumptuary Laws" was caused by the changing status of the sword weapon. When it was the dominant weapon in wars as well as in quarrels or brawls, its large size was an indicator of the carrier's striking power. However, the firearm took the place of the most powerful weapon both in the battlefield and on streets. This change is reflected in the prohibition of carrying weapons. The prohibited weapons mentioned in the proclamations issued on 4th December in 1575 and on 26th July 1579 are "dags" and

[133] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 384.
[134] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 458.
[135] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 3, 176.

pistols as the most offensive weapons.[136] The sword of greater length, which was regarded to be the most dangerous weapon in 1557, was no more paid attention to as a murderous weapon. In that period, the prevention of excessive apparel became the more important matter than that of crime and the weapon was considered more as a sign of social status than just as a practical tool for protection.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the sword, being replaced by the firearm as the primary and the most effective weapon, was strengthening its position as a symbol of its owner's high social status or estate, finding value not in its practicality but in its ornamental elements. In this preference for a more elegant sword, the rapier was shaped into a thinner and lighter one. At the same time, the sword of the medieval period which required sturdy muscle and stamina to be manipulated became out of vogue; the traditional English sword and buckler, which were suitable for actual fighting, was regarded as rude and old-fashioned weapons and the long sword which used to be the symbol of authority and power, came to represent an older age. The development of the fine art of fencing with the rapier also reflects the movement from practicality to decorativeness. Complicated fencing skill did not rely on physical strength any more but it was based on geometrical and mathematical knowledge. When practicing proper postures and dance-like steps, pupils could learn a refined and sophisticated way of

[136] Hughes and Larkin, vol. 2, 398-99; 442-45.

carrying their bodies as aristocrats and nobles. Additionally, the same tendency also appears in the turning interest of the regulations on swords that suggests the authority's understanding of the meaning of wearing swords. As all this evidence shows, we can see a steady transition that could not be turned back any more, even though it was not a one-way progress; the medieval traditions still had a strong influence and there were plenty of nostalgic opinions or objections against such new currents of the time in the period. This way of development of the sword and fencing influenced the representation of the sword in the dramatic works in the period, as will be examined in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2

Sword Properties on the Early Modern English Stage

Swords were markers of their owners' status and function in the period as explained in the previous chapter, and therefore sword properties could be instant signifiers to an audience. The useful props were naturally ones of the most frequent used and the most important instruments in the Early Modern English theatre. However, when we start enquiring into what kind of sword properties were actually seen in original performances, we will realize that it is necessary to reconstruct them with a limited number of surviving pictorial evidence, documents relating to stage business, and play texts. Because of the lack of concrete evidence, their physical characteristics, such as their material and outward appearance, remain uncertain. Shifting the focus from the outside of the theatre to the inside, this chapter will rethink the function of stage swords and then explore their physical features by re-examining the surviving evidence.

First of all, we will start with considering the classification of stage swords and their functions in the Early Modern theatre. "Everything is sign in a theatrical

presentation,"[137] as Tadeusz Kowzan remarks, and so are stage swords. It was the case especially on the stage of the period which was merely a bare platform with no massive scenery nor stage setting, for the visual resources on the stage of the period were almost limited to costumes and stage properties including stage swords. This fact indicates that these items contained much more information to convey to the audience's eyes than those used in a theatre full of other visual materials and that they visually constructed the theatrical world, reinforcing the verbal information supplied in dialogues. These items would show, for example, the identification and relationship of the characters,[138] signify the social classes of their wearers, represent place and time,[139] and so forth. Especially from the iconographical point of view, it is assumed that the audience who lived in the same period as the playwright shared the conventional ways of interpreting those visualized signs and, therefore, could more easily understand the connotations behind the images than we can. To use Tiffany Stern's expression, the audience was trained to "read" clothes as well as stage properties, and playwrights played "games

[137] Tadeusz Kowzan, "The Sign in the Theatre: An Introduction to the Semiology of the Art of the Spectacle," trans. Simon Pleasance, *Diogenes* 61 (1968) 57.
[138] Arthur F. Kinney, *Shakespeare by Stages: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003) 100.
[139] Alan C. Dessen, *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995) 151.

with people's expectations."[140] The sword property was surely one of these significant visual resources on stage.

Although it is sometimes difficult to decide whether swords should be classified as a stage property or a costume, they will be classified under stage properties here. A sword could be regarded as part of a costume in some cases, such as when it appears on stage worn or carried by an actor at his side without any action with it, but the same weapon would become a stage property once he draws it and starts fighting with it. We can also see the confusion of categorizing them in Philip Henslowe's inventories.[141] He places "j longe sorde" among costumes in "*The Enventary of the Clownes Sewtes and Hermetes Sewtes*, *with dievers other sewtes*, *as followeth*, 1598, *the* 10 *of March*,"[142] while all the other weapons are placed in "*The Enventary tacken of all the properties for my Lord Admeralles men*, *the* 10 *of Marche* 1598."[143]

The difficulty to draw a clear distinction between costumes and stage properties is applied to many other visual devices in general. David Bevington mentions costume and

---

[140] Tiffany Stern, *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page* (London: Routledge, 2004) 105.

[141] Though the original papers are now lost, Henslowe's inventories were first printed by Malone in his *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* in 1790 and recorded a selection of properties, costumes and play-books belonging to the Lord Admiral's servants in 1598.

[142] Henslowe 317-18.

[143] Henslowe 319-21.

hand properties, or "appurtenances"[144] separately, but he does not clearly distinguish the two functions, as Teague points out.[145] Brownell Salomon gives one definition of the term "hand properties" citing examples of stage props such as handkerchief, skull or dagger:

> Unanchored physical objects, light enough for a person to carry on stage for manual use there, define hand properties for semiological purposes. Elements usually thought of as part of the decor, or clothing accessories like jewellery or handkerchiefs which are normally considered articles of costume, become hand properties when they assume this independent function. Articles of clothing quite readily become props that are virtual symbolic extensions of their owners.[146]

Pointing out the swift interchanging functions, he draws a line between an article of costume and stage property on the basis of its independent function, that is, it starts functioning as a prop when it bears an independent role. That is also the case for stage weapons. One key to the problem is the actors' action with a stage weapon: that is to say, it will be defined as a hand property either when it induces any actions on stage or when

---

[144] David M. Bevington, *Action is Eloquence: Shakespeare's Language of Gesture* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1984) 35.
[145] Frances N. Teague, *Shakespeare's Speaking Properties* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1991) 198.
[146] Brownell Salomon, "Visual and Aural Signs in Performed English Renaissance Play," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 5 (1972) 160-61.

it indicates actions offstage, whereas the one which is merely worn or carried by the actor and does not have its independent function will be regarded as part of a costume.

In addition to that, the term "property" was understood in a broader sense including "hand properties" as well as those which are usually called "furniture" or "scenery" in modern theatre terminology. Thomas Dekker uses the term "*Properties*" indicating large properties in the chapter, "How a Gallant should behaue himself in a Playhouse," of his *The Gull's Hornbook*. He comically describes the way a gallant should appear on stage: "it is time, as though you were one of the *Properties*, or that you dropt out of the *Hangings*, to creepe from behind the Arras, with your *Tripos* or three-footed stoole in one hand, and a teston mounted betweene a forefinger and a thumbe in the other...."[147] The former discussion as to the difference between a hand property and a costume can be applied to that from a large property, that is, one item can be defined as a hand prop when it not only exists on stage but also has an independent function.

In the case of stage swords, this difficulty of categorizing them partly derives from the dual purposes of wearing swords outside of the theatre: for self-protection and for the presentation of its owner's status or fencing skill. Furthermore, as was examined in the previous chapter, its ornamental element was becoming more emphasized which can be traced in the gradual shift of focus of regulations on a sword's length in royal

[147] E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923) 367.

proclamations; they came to pay more attention to its function as an ornament rather than as a weapon. In short, a sword was regarded not only as a weapon but also as an item of apparel. It is probable that the audiences of original performances saw stage weapons merely worn or carried by actors like ornaments without any independent function and they may also have witnessed those just hung or placed somewhere on stage as part of the large properties in a play.

However, it is fair to categorize a stage sword as a hand property, first because all the kinds of visual signs of a stage sword as part of a costume or of a large property are included in that as a hand property, but not vice versa. When it accompanies an actor's action and turns into a hand property, it starts conveying more diverse meanings. For example, a "drawn" sword can represent a hostile relationships, a tense atmosphere, or a chaotic situation, like the drawn rapier of Antipholus of Syracuse (4.4.138. s.d.) in *The Comedy of Errors*[148] and Casca's drawn sword (1.3.19) in *Julius Caesar*. Secondly, a sword is an instrument that makes the audience expect some kind of actions to be performed, like sword fighting. In other words, a stage sword tended to be a hand property rather than to remain a superfluous part of the costume.

[148] It follows the stage direction in the first folio, "*Enter Antipholus Siracusia with his Rapier drawne, and Dromio Sirac*" ($H6^{v}$). However, since it does not correspond with the description in the following dialogue, "come with naked swords" (4.4.139), Alexander Dyce emends the singular to the plural "rapiers" and T. S. Dorsch has Dromio "armed."

Lastly, there are only limited amounts of surviving evidence regarding stage swords in the period, so that it makes almost impossible to examine their function as part of costumes. It is true that there exists some evidence that gives hints about stage swords just worn by actors. However, because of the limited amount of external evidence, it is the internal evidence that we rely on in enquiring the nature of stage swords and most internal evidence, "the evidence within the plays themselves,"[149] are relative to those functioning as hand properties accompanied by actors' actions. We can find a lot of descriptions of weapons both in dialogues and stage directions. However, those in dialogues are not entirely reliable as evidences as to the usage of stage swords, for references to the weapon are often made symbolically and metaphorically. Therefore, it is those in the Early Modern stage directions that will supply the most fundamental basis for this study.

The importance of reading stage directions has been pointed out. Dessen, listing the "obvious limitations of the external evidence and the dialogue," states that "attempts to reconstruct the original staging and theatrical conventions must depend largely upon the stage directions in the extant manuscripts, the few theatrical 'plots,' and, most abundantly, the surviving printed texts."[150] He asserts that "groups of stage directions

[149] Alan C. Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984) 19.
[150] Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions* 20.

from a wide range of plays by experienced dramatists" have been regarded as "important basic evidence—indeed, in many cases the only such evidence—for the study of Elizabethan stage practice."[151] Linda McJannet says that stage directions "frequently contain vital information regarding subtle and powerful stage effects."[152] While examining the difficulty of deciding the real author of a stage direction, she claims that "[w]hoever speaks through them, stage directions constitute a distinct code, a set of verbal and visual conventions that vary from period to period, and sometimes... among genres and venues of a single period."[153] Thus, the directions containing sword weapons are reliable clues for investigating their use in playhouses.

Yet, as McJannet points out, stage directions in the Early Modern plays are much less informative and less annotated than those in modern ones, so that they even "*seem* invisible." It is partly because of "the predominance of cues 'hidden' in the dialogue," and further because "Elizabethan directions adhere to a set of conventions that foster both unobtrusiveness and authority."[154] In short, professional actors did not need any precise directions as long as conventional ways of performing were employed and consequently, stage directions were added only for comparatively special or unusual

---

[151] Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions* 25.
[152] Linda McJannet, *The Voice of Elizabethan Stage Directionns: The Evolution of a Theatrical Code* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1999) 17.
[153] McJannet 19.
[154] McJannet 17.

situations, such as when an unaccustomed gesture or action was required or when an actor was not yet familiar with such conventional ways. It can be interpreted that weapon properties are mentioned in stage directions only when they have an independent function accompanied by specific actions, which is why they can be defined as hand properties. It is also true that there are some examples where an actor is directed just to carry or wear a stage sword as a symbolic part of costume, representing the wearer's social status or giving a ceremonial or divine air. However, most of the stage directions including the word "sword" instruct an actor to take specific actions or make gestures with it or connote that some actions involving the weapon have happened offstage.

Let us look at some examples of these stage directions requiring actions. There are some directions that direct an actor to swear on the sword. The cross of a bladed weapon, especially a sword, is used for a pledge, as when Hamlet requires Horatio and Marcellus to swear on his sword (*Ham.* 1.5.162). A dagger is used for the same purpose in *Soliman and Perseda*: "*He sweareth him on his dagger*."[155] The directions at the end of *The Famous Victories of Henry V* specifies the gesture of kissing a sword for swearing:

[155] Quotations from all the works of Thomas Kyd are taken from *The Works of Thomas Kyd*, ed. Frederick S. Boas (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955) and references are to this edition.

BURGON. I Philip Duke of Burgondie,

Sweare to Henry King of England,

…….

And thereunto I take my oath.

He kisseth the sword.

HEN.5. Come Prince Dolphin, you must sweare too.

He kisseth the sword.[156]

In the anonymous *King Leir*, an actor is directed to drop his dagger: "*He quakes, and lets fall the Dagger*"[157] (Sc.19. 1739-40). Because of the limitation of the surviving materials and the nature of the inner evidence, it is appropriate to define a stage sword as a hand property.

The functions of sword properties are not entirely the same as those of real swords offstage; and actors, needless to say, know that they are not going to be injured or killed with these props but are just pretending as if they were real in the fictional world. Nonetheless, its tangible and visual quality brings the sense of reality onto the stage. Frances N. Teague explains this in her definition of a property as follows:

---

[156] Anon. *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth: The Earliest Known Quarto, 1598* (London: Praetorius, 1887) G2^{r}.

[157] *The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his Three Daughters, Gonerill, Ragan, and Cordella*, London, 1605, eds. W. W. Greg and R. Warwick Bond (Malone Society Reprints, 1907).

> A *property* is an object, mimed or tangible, that occurs on stage, where it functions differently from the way it functions offstage. At the moment when the audience notes its entry into the dramatic action a property has meaning; it may also have meaning as one of a class of objects. A property can carry multiple meanings, which may sometimes conflict.[158]

As Felix Bosonnet states, any stage property is "what it represents" and "[i]n the representation of reality by something other than reality, in the make-believe which is essential to theatre, properties are an element of direct, unmediated reality."[159] One of the important functions of these tangible objects is to visually bring the reality into the fictional world. As Teague says, "[t]he ordinary function of the object does not disappear; an object has the same connotation that it has offstage."[160] An appearance of stage swords could, therefore, bring a greater sense of reality into the fictional world especially in the period when swords or other weapons were commonly seen in society; and furthermore, it could convey an abundant message in order to visualize a specific atmosphere.

First of all, swords carried by armed actors will be a marker of war time or the battlefield. Philip Sidney sarcastically refers to the theatrical convention: "two Armies

---

[158] Teague 16-17.
[159] Felix Bosonnet, *The Function of Stage Properties in Christopher Marlowe's Plays* (Bern: Francke, 1978) 10.
[160] Teague 18.

flie in, represented with foure swords & bucklers, and thẽ what hard hart will not receive it [the stage] for a pitched field."[161] It suggests that the appearance of a few soldiers equipped with swords and bucklers represented the battle field on the Early Modern English stage. This famous critical comment is echoed by Shakespeare and Jonson. In Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the Chorus makes an excuse for reducing the great Battle of Agincourt into "brawl ridiculous" with only a few shabby swords:

> And so our scene must to the battle fly,
>
> Where O for pity, we shall much disgrace,
>
> With four or five most vile and ragged foils,
>
> Right ill-disposed in brawl ridiculous,
>
> The name of Agincourt. (4.0.48-52.)

The word "foils" seems to be "indicating a specifically theatrical weapon."[162] Even though the description as "most vile and ragged foils" may have exaggerated the poor and beggarly quality too much, it tells us that these stage swords were old and worn out by over-using but that they were an accepted mark of a battle. Similarly, Jonson's Prologue to *Every Man in his Humour* describes the staged battle as follows:

> ...with three rustie swords,

[161] Philip Sidney, "The Defence of Poesie," 1595, *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, vol. 3, ed. Albert Feuillerat (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1962) 38.
[162] Edelman 212.

And helpe of some few foot-and-halfe-foote words,

Fight ouer *Yorke*, and *Lancasters* long iarres... (*F1*. Prologue 9-11.)

The fight between Yorkists and Lancastrians was represented by some poor visual device, that is, three sword properties, supported by only a few words.

Many stage directions referring to weapons are closely related to violent or tense situations where the actors are directed to take onstage actions of sword fighting, killing or injuring someone with the instrument. The most common verb accompanied by the word "sword(s)" in the stage directions is "draw"[163]: a direction to "*Draw out his sword*" leads an actor to an onstage action of drawing a sword and sometimes of fighting with a sword. An actor's entrance onto the stage "*with his sword drawn*" may suggest a violent action or battle offstage as well as onstage sword fighting that is going to take place. In some cases, stage directions just imply a sword fight, like an actor entering "*with his sword in his hand,*" while in other cases, stage directions give actors a direct instruction to fight, like "*fights with his sword in one hand*"[164] in William Rowley's *A Shoemaker a Gentleman*. Descriptions of dumb shows more specifically tell us how weapons were handled. In Thomas Heywood's *The Golden Age*, the stage fighting between Jupiter and Saturn during a dumb show is described as: "Saturne,

[163] Alan C. Dessen and Leslie Thomson, eds., *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 223.
[164] William Rowley, *A Merrie and Pleasant Comedy: Called A Shoo-maker a Gentleman* (London, 1638) G1^{r}.

drawes his sword to kill Iupiter*, who onely defends himselfe, but being hotly pursu'd, drawes his sword, beates away* Saturne."[165] When it becomes a tool for suicide, the directions say "*Shee falls on the sword*"[166] or "*Thrust himselfe through with his sword.*"[167] Besides the battle field and violent scenes, Dessen and Leslie Thomson list some occasions where stage directions call for sword properties, such as executions, funerals, ceremonies, or royal events like coronations or processions, or when a woman appears in disguise.[168] A stage sword "worn" by a female character in disguise carries a phallic connotation and completes her transformation into a man. In this case, it is categorized as a costume, unless the character uses it for some other symbolic purpose. In this manner, a sword property could be a symbol of violence, death, masculinity, royalty or nobility, and so forth.

Now we will proceed to the physical characteristics of sword properties. However, a limited amount of surviving evidence makes it difficult to enquire into the actual condition of Early Modern stage swords, such as the shapes of their blades, their ornamental elements, their colours, or their material. The lack of evidence is derived partly from the indifference to recording various types of sword props accordingly. As it

---

[165] Thomas Heywood, *The Golden Age. Or the Lives of Jupiter and Saturne, with the Deifying of the Heathen Gods* (London, 1611) G3^{r}.
[166] William Davenant, *The Vnfortunate Lovers: A Tragedie* (London, 1643) F3 ^{v}.
[167] W. S., *The Lamentable Tragedy of Locrine, the Eldest Sonne of King Brutus. Newly Set Foorth, Ouerseene and Corrected* (London, 1595) K2^{r}.
[168] Dessen and Thomson 223-24.

is commonly accepted, it is unlikely that the people involved in Early Modern theatre business were much concerned with the historical accuracy of the costumes and stage properties, including sword properties. Samuel Johnson severely points out the anachronism in the employment of a rapier in Shakespeare's *Richard II*: "Shakespeare deserts the manners of the age in which his drama is placed, very often without necessity or advantage."[169] As he condemns, Shakespeare anachronistically employs the rapier in his history plays which deal with the period when broad swords were still widely popular and rapiers were not actually introduced into England, as was examined in the first chapter. Historical accuracy was not an issue considered important in his time. Shakespeare, like many of his contemporary playwrights, does not take heed of differentiating them and frequently interchanges the words, such as sword, rapier, falchion, scimitar, etc., according to the metre. For example, Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* unsheathes his sword property by a stage direction, "*draws his sword*" (4.2.86 s.d.), but the words "sword" and "scimitar" are used in the dialogue for the same weapon.

Similarly to these verbal expressions, it is less likely that the playhouse was particularly eager to attain historical accuracy of visual representations. In Robert Greene's *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, for instance, there is a stage direction, "*Enter*

[169] Samuel Johnson, note to "my rapier's point" (*R2*. 4.1), *King Richard II*, by William Shakespeare, ed. Johnson and George Steevens, *The Plays of William Shakespeare*, vol. 5, 1778 (London: Routledge, 1995) P3[r].

Alphonsus *with his rapier*" (Act5.1788-89), but there is no reference to the word, "rapier," in the dialogue.[170] It suggests that a rapier-shaped property actually appeared on stage as the sword of the hero. However, the historical Alphonso V of Aragon was born in 1385 and reigned from 1416 to 1458 and its setting is nominally placed "around the time of the conquest of Naples in 1442" by him, which is before the new type of sword was in use; thus, "there is no pretence to historicity."[171] It is assumed that the selection of sword properties was not necessarily compatible with historical accuracy nor with the verbal expressions in the dialogue. Additionally, Henslowe's inventory, which will be examined again later, uses the term "foils" presumably for sword properties of various kinds. Given that there was little need to specify what kind of sword property was supposed to be employed for a performance, it is natural that not so many precise records or pictures were left for us.

There is still some external evidence we can consult with. In enquiring into the outward appearance of sword properties, the first material to be worked with is the famous drawing of a scene from *Titus Andronicus*, possibly drawn by Henry Peacham [see fig.7]. It is, as E. K. Chambers states, the "first known illustration to any play of the

[170] Quotations from all the works of Robert Greene are taken from *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, ed. A. B. Grosart, vols. 15 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964) and references are to this edition.
[171] Entry for *Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, Martin Wiggins, Catherine Richardson, and Mark Merry, *British Drama, 1533-1642: A Catalogue* (Oxford: Oxford UP, forthcoming).

Shakespearean canon."[172] It depicts four bladed weapons, which are respectively carried by Titus' two sons or his soldiers, Titus, and the black skinned person, which most probably depicts Aaron. The drawing seems to show that the actors of Shakespeare's period carried various kinds of sword properties with blades of different lengths and shapes. Edelman describes the drawing in detail as follows:

> …the less-protected soldier on the far left has a falchion or scimitar, and the other is wearing the standard thirty-six-inch sword, judging its approximate length by its relationship to the overall estimated height of the soldier and the angle at which it sits…. Titus has a much longer sword, apparently a rapier, and Aaron, like the soldiers, appears to be holding the standard variety, given that the distance between his left hand, by his hip, and his right, not fully extended, would be approximately thirty-six inches.[173]

Even though his description is interesting, it must be noted that the drawing cannot be used as reliable and concrete representation to estimate the length of blades in this way.

[172] E. K. Chambers, *Shakespearean Gleanings* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1944) 57.
[173] Edelman 31.

In fact, there is no certain evidence to believe Dover Wilson's claim that the artist of the drawing depicts, "without doubt, what he actually saw at a performance of the play."[174]

Fig. 7 The drawing from a scene of *Titus Andronicus*

The uncertainty derives mainly from the fact that it does not directly fit to any scene of the play. It seems at first glance that it depicts the first scene where Tamora and his sons are taken to victorious Titus; and it is expected that the lines written beneath it were from the scene. However, these lines are actually a combination of the speeches from two different scenes, Act 1 Scene 1 and Act 5 Scene 1. Almost all of them were accurately copied from the play text except for an additional stage direction, "*Enter Tamora pleadinge for her sonnes going to execution*," which does not exist in Shakespeare's text but was most presumably invented by the scribe.[175] Considering the

[174] J. Dover Wilson, "*Titus Andronicus* on the Stage in 1595," *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 1 (1948) 20.
[175] R. A. Foakes, *Illustrations of the English Stage: 1580-1642* (London: Scolar, 1985) 48.

accuracy of the quoted lines, it is most probable that the scribe could consult with the play text, though it does not mean that the person witnessed the performance.

The problem that confuses us in defining the scene is the black figure standing on the far right with a sword drawn in one hand and pointing at either the edge of the sword or Tamora's sons with his finger. The figure is more likely to be Aaron than otherwise: first because he is the sole character in the play with black skin and secondly because Shakespeare's text closely associates the black colour with Aaron as a sign of his strikingly evil and villainous disposition. However, supposing it is Aaron, his pose is not appropriate in the depicted scene, for in this scene, Act 1 Scene 1, he should be one of the prisoners tied by his hands like the other captives illustrated here. It may be explained by John Munro's suggestion that this depiction can be understood in the tradition of "comprehensive" illustration. He says that "[i]t shows the situation as Titus finishes speaking at I i 103, plus the figure of Aaron, not as he was at that moment, but as the man who could speak as in V i 125f."[176] Though his claim is persuasive, it is doubtful to presume that the black figure depicts Aaron in the other scene written down here, that is Act 5 Scene 1. The quoted lines write his speech where, being caught by Lucius, one of Titus' sons, he reveals all his villainies in order to save his own son. Even though his boasting of his wickedness could have created shudders in audiences in the

[176] John Munro, "*Titus Andronicus*," *The Times Literary Supplement* 10 June 1949: 385.

theatre either on stage or not, it is impossible for him to scare them in the depicted posture raising up his sword, for at the point in the play, he remains in a state of captivity up on a ladder during his speech. It is in Act 4 Scene 2 where Aaron impressively takes the action of brandishing his sword against Tamora's two sons and the nurse who insist on killing his illegitimate black-hued baby. The picture, then, does not perfectly fit to any written lines, which increases the possibility that its artist was a different person from the scribe.

It is also conceivable that the artist may never have witnessed any performance but have illustrated purely from his imagination by reading the text. In this case, the lines the artist consulted were presumably those from the play text rather than those written down on the sheet where there is no description of Aaron's unsheathing a sword. On the other hand, it was claimed that he might have drawn "from memory, without consulting the text,"[177] or draw from recollection "bringing together into a group separate sketches of individual actors made when watching a performance."[178] Yet, the fact that the artist used only the upper part of the whole space suggests either that the artist expected the quoted lines would be inserted afterwards or that the lines had been already written

[177] Alan Hughes, introduction, *Titus Andronicus*, by William Shakespeare, ed. Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994) 21.
[178] Foakes, *Illustrations* 50.

before the artist started working on the sheet. There is a strong likelihood that the artist had read the lines, too.

Considering all these matters, it can be interpreted that the artist drew the characters and the moments that vividly remained in his memory, no matter whether the image is derived from the real theatre or purely from the book. Aaron's action of brandishing his sword should have been quite sensational and scary, so that the drawer eventually added the black figure not kneeling like the other captives but standing with the weapon in his hand. In any case, to return to the question as to its quality as a record of the Early Modern English stage, there remain too many uncertainties which makes it difficult to affirm that the drawing is an accurate record of the original performance of *Titus Andronicus*.

Nonetheless, the artist's choice of the types of sword gives us a hint about how sword properties were employed for a performance at that time. As in Edelman's description cited above, we can see several types of sword properties depicted in the drawing. The long sword or rapier worn by Titus appears to visually represent its carrier's status. It indicates a possibility that there were some cases where its visual peculiarity was taken into account for performances. However, it is also true that besides the long sword, the artist did not necessarily take active interest in applying the

visual differences among them for representing the characteristics or status of each character. Let us look at the swords worn by the two soldiers standing behind Titus. One of them has a straight blade and the other a curved blade, even though there is no necessity to give them different types of swords. It appears that the artist carelessly or randomly applied various shapes of swords to characters. The sword held by the black figure is with a straight blade. Granted that the black figure in the drawing is Aaron, the artist did not even follow the verbal expressions of the author. In Shakespeare's text, it is indicated that Aaron's sword is more likely to be one with a curved blade, for he apparently names his sword a "scimitar" (4.2.90), a cumbersome sword with a curved blade. The artist, like most of his contemporaries, was not cautious about differentiating them. It is likely that the appearance of the stage illustrated in the drawing reflects the ordinary state of performing as well as sword properties seen in the theatre, where different types of sword properties with blades of various shapes and lengths were randomly given to actors without paying much attention to what character they were going to perform nor to which place and time the play takes place.

The documents relating to the Revels Office give us ideas about the outward appearance and visual effects of sword properties employed for Court performances. There are frequent references to a variety of sword properties, such as swords, falchions,

daggers, rapiers, and so forth. For example, the "emptions" (i.e. purchases) and provisions from December 1570 to February 1571 made under the Master of the Revels Office, Thomas Benger, contains the list of implements and properties bought or provided by John Carow, a property maker and carver, who was paid 14 pounds 11 shillings and 1 pence in total:

> Iohn Carow for sundry percells of stuf by him bowghte and provyded for the use of this office & [for] the plaies mask*es* & showes sett foorth therof by the seide M*aste*rs co*m*maundement. vid*elcet*…. Bowes, bills, daggs, Targett*es*, swordes, daggers, fawchins fierwo*r*ke, Bosses for bitt*es*, speares, past, glew, pacthrede, whipcorde, Holly, Ivy, & other greene bowes, bayes & strewing erbes & such like Implem*ent*e*s* by him employed at the coo*r*te & in thoffice to acceptable purposes w*ith* cariag*es*….[179]

There are three different kinds of sword properties, swords, daggers, and falchions, included in the list. It indicates their outward peculiarities were made use of in performance. In addition to that, they record decorations added to sword properties, like painting, gilding, foiling, and plating. For instance, the account for the necessities of the "Revell*e*s At the Coronac*i*on of Edward the Sixt" in 1547 also includes a payment to a

[179] Albert Feuillerat, ed., *Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (Louvain: Uystpruyst, 1908) 140.

painter, John Simson, for gilding and painting "in sondry Colo*ur*s of xx ffachell*e*s & holmac*es* for Maskers"[180] at 12 pence apiece and 20 shilling in total, which tells us how colourful the properties were made for the ceremonial event. Likewise, there is an entry on a disbursement of 22 shillings for foiling "for vyzard*e*s & ffawchins"[181] paid by Edward Buggin, the Clerk-controller of the Tents and Revels, in the accounts between 1 May 1572 to 31 October 1573; or the payment of 10 shillings to a wiredrawer, Thomas Leverett, for "plating iiij ffawchyns"[182] in the period from 20 December 1573 to 11 January 1574.

Like the Revels office, the public playhouse may also have employed sword properties of various shapes and with decorative elements. However, we cannot always apply the description in the Revels Accounts to the case of the public theatre. In this enquiry, the next material we should examine is *Henslowe's Diary*, which is one of the most significant external documents as to stage properties in the public theatre, though it is much less informative. Almost all the surviving evidence about the weapon property that Henslowe left is in his inventory, that is, the two entries of stage swords mentioned above, "j longe sorde" and "xvij foyles," which do not give any precise

[180] Albert Feuillerat, ed, *Documents Relating to the Revels at Court in the Time of King Edward VI and Queen Mary: The Loseley Manuscripts* (Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1963) 3, 6.
[181] Feuillerat, *Elizabeth* 183.
[182] Feuillerat, *Elizabeth* 202.

descriptions about their material or shape. There can be found some other records as to the payments for stage properties. However, they tell us little about how and when these instruments were added to the resources, what kind of stage props he purchased or how much he paid for each item, because a variety of stage props and sometimes even costumes are treated inclusively as divers things. On 2 May 1601, for instance, a payment of three pounds delivered to Radford, who is known as "the little tailor" in contradistinction to Dover called "the tailor," is recorded as follows:

> dd vnto the littell tayller at the apoyntment
> of th*e* companye th*e* 2 of maye 1601 to bye divers
> thing[s] for th*e* playe of [skelton & skogen] the blind
> begger of elexsandrea[183]

Though he is a tailor, it is probable that Radford was also appointed to buy stage properties for the play. The description, "divers thing[s]," which may or may not include sword properties, never tells any details of individual items. Similarly, the account of a payment of 25 shillings to the property-maker on 27 June 1602 is also quite brief as follows:

> Lent vnto the company 1602 the 27 of
> June to paye vnto hime w^{ch} made ther

[183] Henslowe 169.

propertyes for Jeffa…[184]

Since there is no precise information as to what kind of stage properties for the play "Jeffa" (i.e. *Jephthah*) were made by "hime," it remains completely uncertain even whether he made a payment for sword properties or not.

These less detailed descriptions indicate that Henslowe had no necessity to leave records concerning any payments for sword properties for some reason. It is somewhat conceivable that there was truly no payment for buying any new sword props or for mending old ones during the period of his *Diary*. However, it is more likely that Henslowe was not the person in charge of specifying and ordering the necessities for staging each play. The accounts refer to some actors' names as the people who were appointed payment for their company. On 19 May 1601, for example, the amount of five pounds was lent unto two players of the Admiral's Men, Robert Shaa and Edward Juby, to "bye divers thing[s] for the Jewe of malta."[185] Similarly, players, such as John Duke, Thomas Blackwod, John Thare, and so forth, authorize payments of various costumes and properties on behalf of the Worcester's Men from 17 August 1602 to 9 May 1603.[186] These entries suggest that it was these players who were responsible for arranging costumes and properties. All that Henslowe had to do was to pay or lend the amount of

[184] Henslowe 203.
[185] Henslowe 170.
[186] Henslowe 213-26.

money required by them and write down the total sum of it in his account, so that he did not take the trouble to record the details.

Going back to the entry of sword properties, "xvij foyles," in his inventories, it is first noticed that a larger number of foils are contained in the resources of the Admiral's Men in comparison with other items. According to Andrew Gurr and Mariko Ichikawa, this number suggests that there was a need for a playhouse to supply these sword properties for they were among the items that actors were not allowed to wear or carry once they stepped out of the stage.[187] Secondly, there is no detail relating to foils other than the number, while some other entries of stage properties have additional information. There are some entries of the same property of different materials, like "j wooden hatchett" and "j lether hatchete"; or "jx eyorn targates," "j copper targate" and "iiij wooden targates."[188] Other kinds of information are added when a certain property has a specific external appearance or a specific purpose that should be marked. For example, there are cases where the information on ornamental elements is included like "greve armer" and "gylte speare"; or where names of the character in the play are specified, like "Tamberlyne brydell," "Cupedes bowe, & quiver," or a "shelde, with iij

[187] Andrew Gurr and Mariko Ichikawa, *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000) 69.
[188] Henslowe 319-20.

lyones" which symbolizes Richard I.[189] The lack of precise description of foils suggests that there was a little need to do so. It could be because all the sword properties were of similar value and bore similar characteristics at least from Henslowe's point of view. In this sense, the separate entry of a long sword is quite interesting. It is worth investigating what the term "foyle" exactly means in the inventory as well as in the theatrical terminology at that time and for what purpose it was distinguished from the "long sorde."

The *OED* defines the word "foil" as a "light weapon used in fencing; a kind of small-sword with a blunt edge and a button at the point."[190] It is regarded that the sense of the word derived from the verbal meaning of the word, to "tread under foot, trample down,"[191] so that the foil is etymologically denoted as "a sword with the point *foiled* or blunted," though the verb "does not appear to have meant 'to blunt.'"[192] This definition, however, is too general to specify its usage in the period and, therefore, it should be narrowed down further by examining references to it in play texts.

The study of the fencing scene in *Hamlet*, which is, however, not a play first performed by the Admiral's Men but by the Chamberlain's Men, will still be quite

---

189 Henslowe 320.
190 "Foil," def., *n.*[5] 1, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1989). The purpose of the "button" was to prevent accidental injury during practice or on the stage.
191 "Foil," def., *v.*[1] 1, *OED.*
192 "Foil," def., *n.*[5], *OED*.

effective in terms of enquiring into the shared idea about the foil in the theatre of the period. There are several references to the word "foil" indicating weapons used in the fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes: first, in the dialogue where Claudius and Laertes are weaving a plot to take Hamlet's life in the duel; secondly, in the answer of Osrick who is sent to convey a message to Hamlet by the king; and lastly, in the stage direction which mentions the entrance of the characters and stage properties including weapons for the duel scene. Despite considerable differences among three substantive texts, the first quarto, the second quarto, and the first folio, it can be recognized that the descriptions of the word, "foil," in these texts share a common understanding, that is, it signifies a fake sword used to practice fencing or to perform swordfighting onstage.

When telling Laertes the plot of killing Hamlet in the first quarto, Claudius explains how Laertes can identify the specific weapon to do the deed as follows:

> When you are hot in midst of all your play,
>
> Among the foyles shall a keene rapier lie,
>
> Steeped in a mixture of deadly poyson...[193]

Here, Claudius clearly distinguishes the two words, "rapier" and "foil." A rapier is a real sword with a keen edge, which Laertes must choose, whereas a foil is a fencer's practice sword with a blunt edge or a bated sword which can "hit but hurt not" (*Ado.* 5.2.11-12).

[193] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet: First Quarto, 1603* (Menston: Scolar, 1969) H3^{r}.

At the same time, however, they must resemble to each other in appearance, which is actually crucial for success in the murder of Hamlet in the duel. In the equivalent part in both of the second quarto and the first folio, the king says to Laertes: "[Hamlet] Will not peruse the Foiles? So that with ease, / Or with a little shuffling, you may choose / A Sword vnbaited."[194] As it implies here, these two forms of swords were difficult to be differentiated at one glance without careful "perusing." The term foil is also used with the same meaning in Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*, from which the first example of the definition in *OED* is quoted:

> Iacke Leiden theyr magistrate had the image or likenesse of a péece of a rustie sword like a lusty lad by his side, now i remember me, it was but a foile neither, and he wore it, to shew that he should haue the foile of his enemies, which might haue bin an oracle for his two-hande interpretation.[195]

The rusty sword Jack Leiden wears cannot represent his determination, for rust on a blade connotes the state of being disused or lack of practical experience. His inability to defeat or "haue the foile of" his enemies is further emphasized, when his sword is revealed to be just a foil, a sword without a real edge. This representation first shows

[194] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet,* 1623, *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, ed. Charlton Hinman (New York: Norton, 1968) pp4^{v}.
[195] Thomas Nashe, *The Vnfortunate Traueller. Or, The life of Iacke Wilton* (London, 1594) D3^{v}.

that a foil was understood to be a fake sword useless in a battle in the period and then connotes that Jack Leiden regards it as possible to deceive the witnesses into believing a foil to be a real sword.

Moreover, a "foil" was a term generally used in the context of fencing especially in the Continental style and the spread of the word in this sense probably correlates with the popularization of the new style of fencing. The wooden sword for an exercise of the sword and buckler fight, the traditional English style of sword-fighting, was not called a foil but a waster, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The first example of the "foil" in this definition in *OED*, the said allusion by Nashe, is from a text in 1594, that is, after the introduction of the Continental fencing style into England and besides, the word "foils" came to signify an exercise of sword fighting by its own.[196] It is obvious that the foils prepared in *Hamlet* were those for a fencing match in the latest Continental style. All the three texts clearly specify that Laertes and Hamlet are going to fight in the style of fencing with the "Rapier and dagger." In the first quarto, a gentleman tells Hamlet that "yong Laertes in twelue venies / At Rapier and Dagger do not get three oddes of you."[197] In the second quarto and the first folio, Osrick, or a courtier in Q2, answers

[196] "Foil," def., *n.*[5] 2, *OED.*
[197] Shakespeare, *Ham.: Q1*, I2[v].

"Rapier and dagger" to Hamlet's question "What's his weapon?"[198] The foils appearing in the scene were, therefore, shaped like rapiers of the Continental style.

Instead of this association with the rapier fight, it is not only rapier-shaped weapon properties but also those with various shapes of blades that the term "foils" indicates in the theatrical terminology. Gurr and Ichikawa say that the entry of seventeen foils in Henslowe's inventory appears to signify all the kinds of bladed weapon properties, broadswords or rapiers indifferently in the resources of the Admiral's Men, on the assumption that it was the playhouse's responsibility to prepare all these things.[199] Actually, it is likely that the repertoire of the Admiral's Men requires different kinds of sword properties. There are references in dialogues that call for rapier, falchion, cutlass, dagger, knife, poniard, and so on, even though there are not so many stage directions which clearly specify them. Let us take examples from the repertoire of the Admiral's Men. In *The Spanish Tragedy*, which was performed by the company in 1597,[200] the play within the play requires at least three sword properties including one with a curved blade. Hieronimo, casting Balthazar for the part of Soliman, the Sultan of Turkey, in the

---

198 Shakespeare, *Ham.: F1*, pp6^{v}; *Ham.: Q2*, N2^{v}.

199 Gurr and Ichikawa 69.

200 *Henslowe's Diary* records 16 performances given by the Strange's Men, "14 Mar. 1591/2, and thence 22 Jan. 1592/3," and 13 performances by the Admiral's Men, "7 Jan. 1596/7, and thence till 19 July"; also by the Admiral's and Pembroke's Men on 11 October. (Walter W. Greg, *Henslowe's Diary Part II: The Commentary* (London: Bullen, 1908) 153).

play performed at the wedding, requires him to "prouide a Turkish cappe, / A black mustacio, and a Fauchion" (4.1.143-44). His employment of all these Turkish-like costumes and stage props including the falchion, which is substituted for a Turkish curved sword, aims at the visualization of the Turkish origin of the character. Even though it is not clearly specified either in stage directions or in dialogue in the scene, it is assumed that the actor in the role of Balthazar carries a falchion-shaped property on stage.

In Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, repeatedly performed mostly by the Admiral's Men,[201] Wrath, one of the Seven Deadly Sins shown to Faustus, introduces himself as someone who has "run up and downe the world with these case of Rapiers" (688-89).[202] In spite of the lack of stage directions as to what weapon properties should be carried by Wrath on stage, it is supposed that the reference to a "case of Rapiers" in the dialogue gave information enough for the actor in the role to choose two rapier-shaped properties among all the others and appear on stage with them in his hands. It is not impossible to speculate that the selection of the sword type was left

[201] *Henslowe's Diary* records 25 performances of the play in all, given by the "Admiral's men as an old play on 30 Sep. (2 Oct.) 1594, and thence till 5 Jan. 1596/7" and by the "Admiral's and Penbroke's men, 13 (?) Oct. 1597." (Greg, *Commentary* 168).

[202] Quotations from all the works of Christopher Marlowe are taken from *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981) and references are to this edition.

entirely to the actors: they may have chosen the best one among a various types of "foils" stored in the company's resource according to the context or may have picked up any one without careful consideration. Whether or not there was a diversity in their shape, Henslowe who is practically concerned only about financial matters did not take trouble to sort out these "foils" as long as they are of similar value.

However, it seems likely that shorter bladed sword properties were not included in "foils." This is suggested by frequent references in stage directions to a dagger or poniard differentiated from ordinary swords. For example, there is a stage direction found in both A and B texts of *Doctor Faustus*: "Mephostophilis *gives him [Faustus] a dagger*" (1725 s.d.)[203] When Faustus was going to kill himself with it in despair, a faithful old man comes to stop him and almost persuades him to repent. But threatened by Mephostophilis, he begs for Lucifer's pardon of his unjust presumption. It is likely that the dagger is also used to cut his arm to confirm his "former vow" (1750) with his own blood.

Let us go back to the duelling scene in *Hamlet* to take an example. A stage direction in the second quarto directs the appearance of all the characters and stage props for the scene as: "*A table prepard, Trumpets, Drums and officers with Cushions, King, Queene,*

[203] This stage direction is seen both in A and B texts.

and all the state, Foiles, daggers, and Laertes."[204] It is noteworthy that foils and daggers are separately alluded here, which seems to prove the differentiation between them. However, there is no reference to the word "daggers" in the first folio: "*Enter King, Queene, Laertes and Lords, with other Attendants with Foyles, and Gauntlets, a Table and Flagons of Wine on it.*"[205] The arguments regarding this stage direction often focus on the minor alterations from Q2 to F1: obviously, the order of entrance is altered and cushions and daggers are substituted by gauntlets in this stage direction. In spite of these differences, there is no strong reason to question the authority of the second quarto stage direction. There is more likelihood that it represents the way these characters and items actually appeared on stage in the original performance. For example, the place of Laertes' entrance in Q2, which seems odd, may indicate the actor of the role really entered at the end. Edelman claims that it is likely to represent Shakespeare's intention aiming at "an effective piece of dramatic technique in focusing attention on Hamlet's guilty opponent while the weapons are selected and the fencers take their guard for the first pass."[206] Similarly, it is probable that the separate entry of "*Foiles*" and "*daggers*" in Q2 describes that sword properties of two different lengths were brought in an actual performance. It also shows that dagger properties were differentiated from foils in the

[204] Shakespeare, *Ham.: Q2*, N3^{v}.
[205] Shakespeare, *Ham.: F1*, pp6^{v}.
[206] Edelman 186.

theatrical terminology. Additionally, the disappearance of daggers in the later text does not mean that the word "foils" came to include shorter bladed sword properties. It is more probable that daggers came to literally disappear from the duelling scene reflecting the changing fashion of stage fighting or that the allusion was omitted because the book-keeper's ideas of staging are different from the author's, as Dover Wilson claims,[207] though as Harold Jenkins notes, "the significance of this in updating the action has perhaps been overstressed."[208]

In addition to shorter sword properties, longer ones were also differentiated from "foils." Henslowe's inventory separately records "j longe sorde" in a list of costumes of the same date as the list of stage properties including seventeen foils. It suggests that the playhouse owned a long sword property which had an apparently longer blade than foils and may have had a different function and price, too. Although the significance of the differentiation between them should not be too much stressed, there is more likelihood that they were listed apart not by accident but on purpose. Considering the peculiar interest in the length of the blade in the period, there was a need to prepare a long sword property for some cases: for example, its visual quality may have been required so as to symbolically represent some characteristics or situations, which the audience was

[207] John Dover Wilson, *What happens in 'Hamlet'* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1935) 280.
[208] Harold Jenkins, note to "*foils and daggers*" (5.2.220. s.d.) *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare, ed. Jenkins (London: Methuen, 1982).

expected to easily recognize. The *Titus* drawing may have illustrated a long sword property carried by Titus, for his sword is admittedly depicted longer than the others. It can be interpreted that the artist recognized a semiotic need for such a person in such a flourishing status as Titus in the ceremonial scene to wear a long sword or rapier, reflecting the symbolism of a long sword in reality.

There are some references to weapons in play texts that require one long sword to be brought onto the stage. Pointing out that the inventory includes a long sword, Dessen and Thomson list the stage directions calling for a long sword.[209] For example, a stage direction unique to the revised version of the 1616 folio of *Every Man in his Humour*, first performed by the Chamberlain's Men in 1598, requires bringing one to Clement, an old merry Magistrate: "*He flourished ouer him with his long-sword*" (5.3.35.s.d.). The appearance of a long sword in the original staging is also confirmed by his words which can be seen in both the 1601 quarto and the 1616 folio:

> Oh Gods pittie, was it so sir, he must arrest you: giue me my long sworde there: helpe me of; so, come on sir varlet, I must cut of your legges sirha; nay stand vp, ile vse you kindly; I must cut of your legges I say. (5.3.102-5)[210]

[209] Dessen and Thomson 223-24.
[210] The quotation is taken from the quarto version of 1601.

The actors taking actions with a long sword are indicated by the phrase above: he requires to "give" him a long sword or to "help" him to draw it. Robert S. Miola notes that "Clement shows allegiance to the English long sword as opposed to the rapier and newer continental fashions."[211] It is also possible that the one mentioned in the dialogue of *Romeo and Juliet* actually appeared on stage. Similarly, an appearance of a long blade is demanded in a stage direction in Thomas Dekker's *The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse*, "*Enter a fellow with a long rapier by his side*" (2.1.217 s.d.).[212] In this case, contrary to those as a symbol of the high social status or of the old age, the longer blade is displayed as a visual code of a braggart. A long rapier property is required in order for the audience to "see" the disposition of the wearer at a glance. As these references indicate, it is likely that the resources of the Admiral's Men and the Chamberlain's Men contained at least one long sword or rapier differentiated from "foils" of ordinary length.

The stage directions, especially the one in Q2 *Hamlet*, and the separate entry of two types of sword properties in Henslowe's inventory suggest the definition of the term "foil" in the theatrical terminology shared among the Chamberlain's and King's Men

---

[211] Robert S. Miola, footnote to "long sword" (5.3.106). *Every Man in his Humour*, by Ben Jonson, ed. Miola (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000).

[212] Quotations from all the dramatic works of Thomas Dekker are taken from *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953-61).

and also by Henslowe. It is likely that the term covers various kinds of weapons equipped with a blunt blade but of similar length, that is, those not as short as a dagger or poniard but not as long as a long sword. Given the contemporary sensitiveness to the length of a blade, it may have been necessary or a matter of course to categorize these sword properties of different lengths accordingly. As has been examined, the Early Modern English playhouse owned a variety of sword properties which were classified mainly by their lengths. And the differences in lengths as well as in shapes were utilized as visual indications in performances.

In addition to that, the public playhouse may have followed the pattern of the Revels Office in the ornamental elements added to sword properties. There are some stage directions that require highly decorated sword props through which the high social status of its owner is visually represented. In Thomas Dekker's *If This be not a Good Play, the Devil is in it*, Alphonso, the King of Naples, appears on stage wearing a crown and an imperial robe and with "*Swordes of State, Maces, &c. being borne before him*" (1.2.0. s.d.). All these items mentioned here represent his monarchic state in the ceremonial situation to welcome his queen. It seems likely that the "Swordes of State" were bestowed some additional visual elements to make them stately enough. Similarly in Thomas Heywood's *Edward IV, Part One*, the Lord Mayor appearing in "*his scarlet*

gowne, with a guilded rapier by his side" declares his lawful right to wear a rapier as follows:

> I marie Crosbie this befittes thee well,
>
> But some will mervaile that with a scarlet gowne,
>
> I weare a guilded rapier by my side:
>
> Why let them know, I was knighted in the field,
>
> For my good seruice to my Lord the king,
>
> And therefore I may weare it lawfully,
>
> In Court, in Cittie, or at any royall banquet.[213]

Though the weapon is a complete anachronism in the period of the play, his claim shows that a rapier was regarded as a symbol of the knightly state of the owner. To make the visual code of swords clearer, the weapon's symbolic function is emphasized by an additional visual effect, gilding, on the instruments. These ornamental effects were one of the diverse ways the playhouse used in order to make sword properties highly appeal to the tastes of the audience of the period.

Let us look at other examples of visual effects of stage swords. Those especially with an additional visual indication connoting violence in the play, like "bloody" blade

---

[213] Thomas Heywood, *The First and Second Parts of King Edward the Fourth*, 1599 (Philadelphia: Rosenbach, 1922) G3^{r}.

or body, a weapon set in the body, or a broken sword, make the scene richly, or sensationally visual. This visual effect could have been made by painting, using red fabric, or with putting fake blood which made the "blood" more realistic. Andrew Gurr says about the ingredients of the shedding blood on stage: "[b]ladders or sponges of vinegar concealed in the armpit and squeezed to produce the semblance of blood were not unknown."[214] If the same ingredients were used to make bloody effect on sword properties, they must have intensified the connotation of violence given by the appearance of bladed weapons.

The most outstanding and well-known example will be the scene immediately after the murder of Duncan in *Macbeth*:

> MACBETH. ...What hands are here! Ha, they pluck out mine eyes.
>
> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
>
> Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
>
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
>
> Making the green one red.
>
> LADY MACBETH. My hands are of your colour; but I shame
>
> To wear a heart so white. (2.2.57-63.)

[214] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992) 182.

While no stage direction mentions it, the richly colourful expressions in their dialogue signifies that the hands of Macbeth who brings daggers into the stage as well as those of Lady Macbeth who carries them away were vividly stained with crimson colour. The daggers and blood visible to the eyes firstly let the audience know the fact that he has truly "done the deed" (2.2.14), the regicide, and then, enhanced by his poetical description that the blood will dye the entire ocean, make them imagine the "sorry sight" (2.2.18) that the couple witnessed as well as feel the depth of the sense of sin he is destined to be racked with hereafter. What is intended to be recalled in the scene is the "dagger of the mind" (2.1.38) on whose "blade and dudgeon gouts of blood" (2.1.46), no matter whether it was really seen by them or not. By smearing the real daggers with Duncan's blood, he gives a physical form to the vision of a dagger not "sensible / To feeling" (2.1.6-7). The previously described vision not only makes the impression stronger but also gives a symbolical interpretation to the image of blood and a dagger that he has allied himself to with a supernatural power or with "a false creation" represented by the intangible dagger or the weird sisters. It may have recalled Faustus' stabbing his arm and writing with his blood a contract with Lucifer.

It is recognized that at around the beginning of the seventeenth century, stage directions came to make reference to such additional visual effects, such as "*a bloody*

Dagger"[215] which the Duke carries in his hand as the "bloody euidence" in John Ford's *Love's Sacrifice*; or "*bloody daggers*"[216] carried by Aegystheus and Clytemnestra in a dumb show in Thomas Goffe's *Orestes*. In *Antonio's Revenge* written by John Marston, first performed by the Paul's Children in 1600, Piero enters "*vnbrac't, his armes bare, smeer'd in blood, a poniard in one hand bloodie, and a torch in the other*" together with Strotzo "*with a corde*" (1.1.0. s.d.).[217] The weapon stained with "blood" was intended to provoke excitement and interest and lend realism to the scene. Additionally, the striking image of it, with which the audience would be strongly impressed, would be recalled in the later scene when they witness Antonio's entrance with similar bloody effect, "*Enter Antonio, his armes bloody: a torch and a poniard*" (3.5.1297-98. s.d.), so that it "vividly pictures the way in which the revenger becomes the mirror image of his antagonist."[218]

Another way of creating astonishment in audiences by the use of a weapon was to set one "in" the body, probably combined with a blood shedding effect: such as the

---

[215] John Ford. *Loves Sacrifice. A Tragedie* (London, 1633) K3^{v}. He alludes to it as "ponyards" (K3^{v}) in the dialogue.
[216] Thomas Goffe, *The Tragedy of Orestes* (London, 1633) E2^{v}.
[217] John Marston, *Antonio and Mellida & Antonio's Revenge*, 1602, ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1921). Reavley Gair points out the echo of Hieronimo's entrance in *Spanish Tragedy*, "*Enter* HIERONIMO *with a poniard in one hand, and a rope in the other*" (1.0.1-3) in a note for 1.0.1-3 (*Antonio's Revenge*, by Marston, ed. Gair, Manchester: Manchester UP, 1978).
[218] MacDonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill, footnote for 3.2.86. s.d., *Antonio's Revenge*, by John Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, eds. Jackson and Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986).

entrance of Phidias "*with his dagger in him*"[219] (5.1.0. s.d.) in John Fletcher's *Valentinian* first performed by the King's Men in 1614; or the direction to set "*a dagger to his breast*"[220] in Thomas Killigrew's *Claracilla* by the Queen Henrietta's Men in 1636. In Barnabe Barnes's *The Devil's Charter, or Pope Alexander VI*, first performed by the King's Men in 1606, the actor made a pretence of being stabbed with the weapon holding its blade attached to his body, as is directed for the entrance of Lucrece "*undrest, holding a dagger fix't in his bleeding bosome*"[221] (4.1.1965-66. s.d.) It was to the taste of the audience to make the scene highly visual with such a weapon property.[222]

As for the material of stage swords, the supposition that those in the Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses had blunt blades made of metallic material seems to be treated as a matter of fact. Gurr and Ichikawa say that "[i]n all exhibition fights and on stage thrusting weapons had 'bated' or blunted points to limit the risk of penetration."[223] Edelman attempts to prove the metallic material of stage armour on the assumption that strong blows to the body with a metal blade could cause "serious injuries to the actor unless he is well-protected."[224] According to him, the Elizabethan actors' armour,

---

[219] John Fletcher, *Valentinian*, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists: Beaumont and Fletcher*, ed. J. St. Loe Strachey, vol. 2 (London: Fisher Unwin, 1893).
[220] Thomas Killigrew, *The Prisoners and Claracilla* (London, 1641) F11^{v}.
[221] Barnabe Barnes, *The Devil's Charter by Barnabe Barnes: A Critical Edition*, ed. Jim C. Pogue (New York: Garland, 1980).
[222] Teague 96.
[223] Gurr and Ichikawa 68.
[224] Edelman 30.

"being genuine metal, would have afforded excellent protection against the normal blow or thrust, especially as the weapon was bated. (This could be one reason why there is no contemporary account of a serious onstage swordplay accident amongst Shakespeare's company....)"[225] While it seems likely that the audience of the period saw sword properties with metal blades, in fact, the physical quality of the stage weapon has not been fully investigated yet. There is still a possibility that the playhouse made effective use of the visual quality displayed by stage swords with various shapes of blades and made of different materials, which will be explored in the last part of this chapter.

It is worth returning back to the Revels Accounts for this enquiry, as the documents often mention the material for sword properties employed by the Revels Office, besides their outward appearance or ornamental elements examined above. An examination into these documents shows a strong likeliness that those used for the masques or plays for the Court were made of wood. The inventory of Masks of Men dated on 26 March 1555, for instance, contains a variety of wooden sword props: such as six daggers or short falchions of board and mould work for Venetian senators; six Turkey falchions of wood for each Turkish magistrate; six broad daggers of "tree" (i.e. wood) for each Albonois warrior; six falchions of "tree" for each Turkish archer, and six swords of "tree" for

[225] Edelman 32-33.

Irish kerns.[226] As these entries specify, all of the blades were made of wood with hafts, chapes, or scabbards richly ornamented. On the other hand, there can be found no entry of metal weapons. It should be noted that there are frequent references to metallic material for plating, but those decorated with metallic works is not included in our definition of what "metal weapon" signifies. Besides the inventory, we can find some entries which similarly allude to wood materials. For example, a reference to "viij swordes of wood *with* daggers or fauchions to night for the maske"[227] is among the listed items in a warrant for the Lord of Misrule, which is one of the documents relating to the Christmas performances in 1552/3; "vj ffawchons of tymber"[228] among the properties made by John Carow for *A Mask of Greek Woorthies* performed on Candlemas and Shrovetide in 1553; and "waynscott to make blades for rapio*u*rs &c"[229] among purchased properties the payments of which are recorded in the account from 11 March 1575 to 21 February 1576.

The Revels Office's employment of wooden material for these weapon properties can be attributed to the security for the life of the King or the Queen, for the mere existence of lethal weapons in their presence could be a serious threat. This

[226] Feuillerat, *Edward VI and Mary* 181-83.
[227] Feuillerat, *Edward VI and Mary* 92.
[228] Feuillerat, *Edward VI and Mary* 133.
[229] Feuillerat, *Elizabeth* 261.

understanding of the danger of weapons in the presence of the monarchs lead Henry VIII to issue a Royal Proclamation prohibiting weapons in Westminster in 1524:

> The King our sovereign lord straightly chargeth and commandeth that no manner of person, of whatsoever estate, degree, or condition he be, except the sheriff of Middlesex, the warden of the fleet and his officers, bear or wear any manner of weapon, that is to say, bills, swords, bucklers, wood knives, daggers, or other weapons, within his palace or hall of Westminster or the precincts of the same, upon pain of forfeiture of the same weapon, and his body to be committed to ward and to be further punished at his pleasure.[230]

Apparently aiming at tightening security of the monarch, this rule was applied to all the people of any estate, degree, or condition. The weapon property on stage is, of course, supposed to function as a weapon only in the fictional world of the play, but there is no guarantee that it would never turn into a real weapon and start injuring or killing people in the real world. In *The Spanish Tragedy*, the potential lethality of stage weapons is the key in the plot of Hieronimo's blood revenge. In the play within the play performed in the king's presence, he and his conspirator Bel-imperia turn into real murderers of Lorenzo and Balthazar with their supposed sword properties. Furthermore, also in

[230] Hughes & Larkin 1:145.

actuality, there occurred one accident in the prize held on 7 February 1603 at the Swan Theatre where John Dun was thrust into his eye to his death by his competitor John Turner. John Chamberlain reports about it as: "Dun had so yll lucke that the other ran him into the eye with a foyle, and so far into the head that he fell downe starke dead, and never spake word nor once moved."[231] Though it was an incident not in a play but in a fencing match, it is a case where a foil really turned into a weapon on stage. This potential lethality can explain the employment of wooden material in the presence of the monarch: that is, it was for the prevention of every kind of dangerous accident or plot from occurring.

However, it is not always the case in the public playhouse. Unlike those recorded in the Revels Accounts, not all the performances there were designed to be given in the presence of the monarch and, therefore, metallic sword props were not necessarily avoided for the security. They may have employed either wooden ones or metallic ones, or both of them. Actually, it is almost certain that many of those employed by the public theatre were made of metal, perhaps of iron. It is suggested by Jonson's descriptions of weapon properties in the above-mentioned allusion to Sidney's criticism of the conventional way of staging a battle scene in *Every Man in his Humour*: that is, "three

[231] John Chamberlain, ed. Norman Egbert McClure, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939) 1:184.

rustie swords" (Prologue 9) to represent the fight between York and Lancaster. While there is a possibility that rust might be a painted effect, it is more likely that something that can "rust" was made of metallic materials; and additionally, there is a strong likelihood that the material which can be covered or affected with reddish coloured oxide is iron. Though its meaning can be extended to "a similar coating formed upon any other metal by oxidation or corrosion,"[232] the word "rust" more strongly connotes red than any other colour. In addition, the word "rustie" also signifies the bad condition of the sword properties they employed. The poor state is likewise expressed as "four or five most vile and ragged foils" (*H5*.4.0.50) in Shakespeare's response to the same criticism of Sidney. When a sword becomes "rusty," it means that it has been disused over a fairly long time and in consequence its blade appears to be in useless or damaged conditions. Similarly, Jack Leiden's "image or likenesse of a péece of a rustie sword" in Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* mentioned above also connotes the appearance of his sword in a state of disuse.[233] The same adjective also emphasizes the oldness and uselessness of a sword in *The Taming of the Shrew* when Petruchio is reported to be approaching the wedding ceremony wearing an "old rusty sword ta'en out of the town armoury with a broken hilt, and chapeless" (3.2.44-45). Therefore, the sword properties

[232] "Rust," def., n^1 1a, *OED*.
[233] Nashe, *The Vnfortunate Traueller* D3^{v}.

Jonson bore in mind when he was writing the Prologue were most probably those made of iron and in an absolutely poor condition.

In addition to that, it is also conceivable that metallic swords were preferred to wooden ones for the use in stage fighting. In addition, the exhibition of sword fighting was to the taste of the contemporaries. This taste exerted a considerable influence on the representation in the theatrical world, so that the displaying of sword fighting came to be more and more realistic and exciting.[234] In order to perform such stage fights, metal sword props strong enough to resist blows or crushes would be demanded so as to display more vivid and entertaining sword fighting.

A fight with metallic weapons may have appealed not only to the eye but also to the ear. There are stage directions of sound effects, clashing of swords that came to be found in plays written after the 1620s. For example, in John Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, first performed by the King's Men in 1624, the stage direction, "*Clashing swords. A cry within, downe with their swords*,"[235] introduces a sound effect that represents noisy sword fighting off stage. A turmoil starts with the loud noise and "dismall cry"[236] turning the happy talk between Leon and Margarita into a quarrel. In *Love's Cure, or The Martial Maid*, another play first performed by the King's Men, the

[234] Edelman thoroughly examines the sword fighting on the contemporary stage, especially of Shakespeare.
[235] John Fletcher, *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (Oxford, 1640) H3^{r}.
[236] Fletcher, *Rule a Wife* H3^{r}.

sound effect of "*Clashing swords*" (1.3.74. s.d.) within the stage surprises Alvarez and his fellows, by which a fierce attack of Vitelli and his faction against his enemy, Sayavedra, is represented.[237] Likewise, "*Clashing of Swords within*"[238] representing sword fighting is directed in Jasper Mayne's *The Amorous War*, first performed around 1638. Some sword clashing sounds, responding to Artops' cries, "Hark, swords, swords; they come" and "Hark swords again,"[239] are heard by the young courtiers on stage as well as by the audience. In order for all the audience to identify them as sounds of "clashing swords" without any visual expressions, they are reinforced by the following dialogue. Though there is no substantial evidence to show how such a sound was really made, it is supposed to have been a metallic sound similar to the one heard in real sword fighting, so that it could bring a sense of reality into the stage. On the assumption that the sword properties for onstage sword fights were of metallic materials, the stage direction of clashing swords representing an invisible sword fight shows its similarity to the sound the audience heard when they were watching swordfightings.

On the other hand, however, it is not necessarily the case for a long sword property. It was not intended to be used in stage fighting but aiming chiefly at symbolically

---

[237] Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *Love's Cure*, ed. George Walton Williams, *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976).
[238] Jasper Mayne, *The Amorous War* (1648) G4^{v}.
[239] Mayne G4^{v}.

representing their owner's status or disposition through their visual quality. There is a fair possibility that it was made of other materials such as the wooden and leather hatchets or the wooden mattock recorded in Henslowe's inventory, for these materials would be strong enough for this kind of purpose and economical. It is also conceivable that a long sword property was added highly ornate decorations such as painting, gilding, plating, and so forth, in order to emphasize their symbolism, following the pattern of those employed by the Revels Office. As examined above, there are some stage directions calling for highly decorated sword properties. Given that these ornamental elements were required to be added to a long sword, wooden or leather materials are easier to be decorated than metal. Moreover, even though its edge was blunt or "bated," it is hard to presume that the public playhouse could possess a sword with a metallic blade longer than the regulated length in the Sumptuary Laws which prohibited everyone of any rank or degree not only from carrying a sword of excessive length but also from manufacturing such a sword. Although it may sound like pure speculation, it is not impossible to say that wooden or leather material was also employed for sword properties used for symbolic and pictorial purposes where the instruments should be highly decorated and where the blade was not expected to be damaged or broken down with furious and violent crushes.

As it has been examined, the Early Modern English theatre, sufficiently recognizing the visual quality of a stage sword, made use of a variety of sword properties made of different materials and with different visual effects in order to meet diverse situations in a play and to create richly visual scenes on stage. The different shapes and lengths of sword properties helped the audience to grasp the characteristics of its owner as well as of the deed with it. However, it should be noted that the visual language was supported by the verbal expressions which more eloquently specify its shape or length, and convey the significance of its appearance. In the next chapter, the representation of bladed weapons in play texts will be examined, especially focusing on those with a curved blade.

Chapter 3

Swords and Representations of Characteristics

The documents, pictorial evidence and stage directions which were presented in the previous chapter indicate the possibility that sword properties of various shapes and of various materials were witnessed onstage by the audience in the Early Modern English theatre. Especially the length of their blades, as was explored through an examination into the "long sword" property, had some significant meanings in theatrical representation. However, a lack of information inevitably leads us to rely on our suppositions as to how much their differences in appearance were utilized as visual representations of characteristics. Therefore, for the enquiry into the representation of swords, we need to investigate the poetical expressions in dialogue where there is a rich variety of words and phrases for sword weapons that represent different kinds of characteristics. Though it does not prove that the audience of the original staging actually saw varying sword props on stage, the verbal expression, reinforcing the visual quality of a sword prop, poetically conveyed the meaning of it, such as what type of sword it is supposed to be or what symbolism it bears. For example, when an

actor names an ordinary sword property a cutlass, the same prop comes to look different and the same actor starts to bear the characteristics connoted by the cutlass in the audience's imagination. Inspired by imaginative power, verbal expressions complement visual devices so as to make a variety of swords exist on stage. Each of these divers swords conveys a different image through which its carrier's characteristics and states of mind are represented. However, the connotation of the same kind of sword, of course, does not remain the same and this connotation kept changing in the period correlated with the change in the mode or fashion inside and outside of theatres. This chapter considers these poetical expressions of swords as representations of characteristics in the Early Modern drama and attempts to follow the shift of their images.

It should be noted that the types of swords dealt with in this chapter are limited to rapiers and swords with a curved blade, for generally speaking, these two kinds of swords are binary opposites to each other. On the one hand, the rapier is a sword with a thin, light and straight blade, and on the other hand, the curved sword is one with a large, heavy, warlike, and bending blade. The former was a new and fashionable sword which was coming to be more and more popular, while the latter was one apparently becoming out of mode and sometimes even connoted oldness. Lear says in a formulaic expression,

“I have seen the day with my good biting falchion / I would have made them skip. I am old now, / And these same crosses spoil me” (*Lear.* 5.3.250-52). His reference to the falchion indicates his old age, similar to the long sword of Old Capulet. Furthermore, the rapier is strongly associated with the contemporary Continental figure, whereas the curved sword is linked to ancient or legendary figures and ones from the exotic world. In spite of these differences, both types of swords are commonly differentiated from the most typical traditional English swords, such as a broad straight sword or a long sword. And in terms of verbal expression, the words signifying these swords could produce some more poetic effects to the audience than the superordinate word “sword” could. The author’s choice of such a term on occasion implies the type of characteristic given to its carrier as well as some additional meaning to the visual information of the sword property appearing onstage.

In this chapter, more focus will be put on curved swords. And the comparison of them with rapiers will make the peculiarity of curved swords clearer. It can be said that curved swords were less familiar than rapiers in Europe where swords with a bending blade had been numerically exceeded by those with straight ones. For example, if you see Lant’s *Sequitur Celebritas & Pompa Funeris* again, all the swords have straight blades. The cruciform shape of the hilt and the straight blade religiously symbolized the

cross in Medieval times, and later, in spite of the change in fashion, the blade remained straight, which enabled the development of fencing skill in thrusting with rapiers. It is true that there existed a traditional European curved bladed sword, the falchion, but this type of sword was still greatly outnumbered and considered to be exceptional. It is assumed that the more unfamiliar the term was, the stronger the impression would become to the ear of the audience. Therefore, it is interesting to speculate what lead the author to pick up these relatively uncommon words in his literary works and what kind of poetical impact or effect was intended to be added by their unusual or rather unfamiliar and exotic sound.

First of all, there is a need to make definitions of these swords, but because the first chapter has already stated the definition of the rapier, the latest thinner bladed sword introduced from the Continent, it is better to avoid repetition and move on to the others. There are several different types of curved swords, such as falchion, cutlass, scimitar, and so forth. The falchion is a Medieval European sword grown out of the Norse sax, a knife or a short sword, and used until the late fifteenth-century.[240] The cutlass or curtal-axe, which tends to be considered as a sailor's armament, is a short broad sword

[240] Oakeshott 152.

with a slightly curved blade adapted more for cutting than for thrusting.[241] It was a comparatively new word to the people in the period, as is suggested by the year of its first quotation in *OED*. The first example of "curtal-ax" is the one from 1579-80 and that of "cutlass" from 1594; and besides, as it is noted, these terms, especially "curtal-ax," were quite unfamiliar to some people so that they were taken for some kind of battle-axe rather than a sword, which was perhaps suggested by the final part of the word, "-axe."[242] This mistake also suggests that the cutlass was understood as a weapon with a cumbersome blade and evoked martial strength. Similarly, the scimitar is a warlike sword with a short, single-edged, and curved blade.[243] It was used among Orientals, such as Indians, Persians, and Turks, before it was introduced into Europe by Turks and into England in the time of Henry VI. Consequently, it was a sword naturally associated with the exotic world in Early Modern England. The sound of the word,

---

[241] Though there are variations in the term, such as coutelace, coutelas, curtal-ax, and so forth, it will be spelled "cutlass" except in direct quotations in order to avoid confusion.

[242] "Curtal-ax," def., *OED*. A line from *The Faerie Queene* is cited here as an example of this: "With curtaxe vsed *Diamond* to smite" (4:2.42) (Edmund Spenser, *The Works of Edmund Spenser: The Faerie Qveene: Book Four*, eds., Edwin Greenlaw, et al., 1935, Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1961). It is assumed that Spenser took the term for a short axe.

[243] This term also has variants in its spelling, such as simitarie, semeterrie, cimiterre, and the like, but the spelling "scimitar" is adopted except in direct quotations to avoid confusions.

which was adopted in the 16th century from different Roman languages,[244] was likely to be unfamiliar and exotic to the English people.

In spite of these definitions, it is quite likely that these terms were not properly differentiated but used just like synonyms and that a falchion which was a relatively well-known word was used as the superordinate word for all kinds of curved sword. For example, there is a definition of the scimitar in a glossary, titled "A Table, conteyning the declaration of the Names and wordes, vsed in this Historie, aswell Auncient, as Barbarous," of Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi's *The History of the Warres between the Turkes and the Persians*: "*Semitaʸra*, *B*. a Scimitarre, a long crooked Sword. A Faulchon."[245] It does not state any clear distinction between the two different terms, scimitar and falchion, but treats them inclusively as a sword with a long and bending blade. Likewise, the term falchion is used as a hypernym for curved swords in *A Notable Historie of the Saracens*. Turkish swords, perhaps scimitars, are described as follows: "Their Horses and men were kylled lyke Shéepe, and with Turkes falchions

[244] "Scimitar," def., *OED*. The word appears as French *cimeterre*, Italian *scimitarra*, Spanish *cimitarra*, Portuguese *cimitarra*, *semitierra*, *samitarra*. Its origin is unknown. Though a Turkish origin would be expected, no likely etymon has been found in that language. The Persian *shamshīr*, formerly pronounced *shamshēr* agrees in sense but is unsatisfactory as to form.

[245] Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi, *The History of the Warres betweene the Turkes and the Persians*, trans. Abraham Hartwell (London, 1595) Iii2ᵛ.

gored and foyned through."[246] They are differentiated by adding an adjective "Turkes," while French swords are described simply as "falchions"[247] without any adjective. The author must have expected that the word falchion would explain the peculiarly bending shape of Turkish swords. Moreover, Richard Johnson, in *The Most Famous History of the Seauen Champions of Christendome*, uses both of the terms, "Curtle-axe" and "Fauchion,"[248] without distinction to name St. Patrick's sword with which he thrusts into the breast of one of the Satyrs. Considering the synonymous usages of these terms, it makes more sense to treat all of them inclusively as curved swords to examine their representation in this chapter.

The point that we should note in examining the author's choice of these terms is the interchangeability of them in poetical works. The exact same weapon could be named by various terms due to the metre, or in order to avoide repetition, or for some other reason. *OED* additionally explains such interchangeable usage, stating that the word falchion also means a "sword of any kind" in later use and in poetry,[249] which is adopted by many editors of Shakespearean works; for instance, G. R. Hibbard notes in

---

[246] Cælio Augustinus Curio, *A Notable Historie of the Saracens. As also of Turkes, [etc.] Wherunto is Annexed a Compendious Chronycle of their Yeerely Exploytes, from Mahomets Time tyll 1575.* Drawen out of Augustine Curio and Sundry other Authors by T. Newton (London, 1575) Ff2^{r}.
[247] Curio P2^{v}.
[248] Richard Johnson, *The Most Famous History of the Seueen Champions of Christendom* (1596) L4^{r}.
[249] "Falchion," def., *n*. 1, *OED*.

his edition of *Love's Labour's Lost*: "*falchion* in Shakespeare is simply a convenient synonym for sword."[250] It can also be said on the contrary that the same term does not always signify the same kind of sword and convey the same meaning or representation. We should bear in mind these possibilities when investigating the usage of these terms. Nonetheless, it is conceivable that the playwright expected that the unfamiliar sound of a less frequently used term would give a rather strong impression to the audience. The utterance of "cutlass" or "scimitar" would make the staged world seem foreign or distant from the contemporary English world, and reference to a rapier would make the audience feel the Continental atmosphere. The enquiry into these terms in literary works offers insight into meanings or effects added to the representation of an ordinary sword as well as into general conceptions of the terms in the period.

As mentioned above, the rapier was naturally associated with figures who came from the Continent, such as Italian, Spanish, or French, especially those displaying their latest fashion or Continental fencing skill, such as Armado, an affected Spanish braggart in *Love's Labour's Lost*; Caius, a French physician in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night*, and so forth. Rapier and dagger fighting and allusions to its

[250] G. R. Hibbard, note to "falchion" (5.2.607) in William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, ed. Hibbard (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990). See also Randall Martin's note to "falchion" (1.4.12) in William Shakespeare, *Henry VI, Part Three*, ed. Martin (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001); and Antony Hammond's note to "murd'rous falchion" (1.2.96) in William Shakespeare, *King Richard III*, ed. Hammond (London: Methuen, 1981).

fencing terms in *Romeo and Juliet* contribute to the atmosphere of an Italian society on stage. Rapiers are given not only to Continental figures but to English gentlemen or knights reflecting their representation offstage as a kind of status symbol, which was mentioned in the first chapter. For example, in the anonymous *Look About You*, the royal state of Prince John is signified by his cloak, hat, and rapier stolen by Stink (912; 1592)[251]; and similarly, in Dekker's *If This be not a Good Play, the Devil is in it*, the cloaks and gilt rapiers of the courtiers symbolize their status (5.2.9). Some gentlemen allude to the rapier as their weapon when they are going for sword fighting: such as, a gentleman named Peter draws, saying, "Villaine, were it not that we go to be merry, my rapier should presently quit thy opprobrious termes" (232-34) in a collaborative work of Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene, *A Looking-Glass for London and England*; and Falstaff, a knight, though his allusion is an example of an anachronism, demands "Give me my rapier, boy" (*2H4* 2.4.176) to start a brawl with Pistol. As exemplified above, it is assumed that there was a general acknowledgement that the rapier was the most suitable weapon for gentlemen to carry or hold in fights. Some stage directions also specify rapier weapon properties to be brought in by gentlemen and noblemen for the duel and sword fighting scenes. In Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Lambert

[251] Quotations from the play are taken from *Look About You: 1600*, ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1913) and references are to this edition.

and Serlsby, two country squires who wish to marry fair Margaret, are instructed in a stage direction to enter the stage "*with Rapiers and daggers*" (1914 s.d.) with which they kill one another in a duel. Likewise, in the anonymous *Fair Em*, a stage direction instructs two gentlemen, Mountney and Valingford, who are quarrelling for their honour and love for Em, to appear on stage "*at two sundrie dores, looking angerly each on other with Rapiers drauen*" (813-14 s.d.).[252] These examples suggest that the weapon prop was appointed as a device to visually establish their social status.

The outward peculiarities of weapons and continental fencing skills grant certain characteristics to their owners and a certain atmosphere to the theatrical world. The rapier's light and narrow blade was a target of satire and so was the fencing style with it, but at the same time, it was considered a fairly dangerous weapon as its quick movement could cause a fatal injury all of a sudden. Both of these aspects are aptly utilized in *Romeo and Juliet*. In its first half, Mercutio comically and satirically speaks about Tybalt in association with the rapier and his fencing skill, calling him "the very butcher of a silk button" (2.3.20-21) and a "duellist" (2.3.21) and naming the rapier "fiddlestick" (3.1.43) in an analogy with music. However, in a brawl later in the play, Tybalt's thrust of such a narrow blade or "piercing steel" (3.1.153) into Mercutio's body

[252] Quotations from the play are taken from *Fair Em*, 1631, W. W. Greg (London: Malone Society Reprints, 1927) and references are to this edition.

is made under Romeo's arm without being noticed even by spectators and causes Mercutio's sudden death, which provokes Romeo to kill Tybalt and eventually leads the play to a tragic ending.

In many cases, however, dialogue tends to mock the weakness of its blade as well as of the rapier fencer: for example, the "Spaniard's rapier" (*LLL* 1.2.157) mentioned by Armado emphasizes its weakness in comparison with Hercules' club; and the fencing skill of Caius who is proud of his deadly tactics is also satirically spoken of. Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, which was first set in Italy but turned into a London city comedy in its Folio edition, alludes to the fencing terms in the Italian language which are significantly scattered throughout the play. "These references," says Robert S. Miola, "evoke a contemporary and highly charged site of intersection between Italian and English cultures at the turn of the century, evident also in *Romeo and Juliet*" and show the fascination with the new art of Italian rapier fencing among contemporary Londoners.[253] However, unlike in *Romeo and Juliet*, the rapier never becomes a seriously deadly weapon in *Every Man in his Humour*. Bobadilla, a rapier fencer, never draws his rapier under the excuse that he is "bound to the peace" despite the furious challenge from Downright, a country squire:

[253] Robert S. Miola, introduction, *Every Man in his Humour*, by Ben Jonson, ed. Miola (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000) 11.

DOWNRIGHT. O, PHAROAHS foot, haue I found you? Come, draw, to your tooles: draw, gipsie, or Ile thresh you.

BOBADILLA. Gentleman of valour, I doe beleeue in thee, heare me—

DOWNRIGHT. Draw your weapon, then.

BOBADILLA. Tall man, I neuer thought on it, till now (body of me) I had a warrant of the peace, serued on me, euen now, as I came along, by a water-bearer; this gentleman saw it, M^{r}. MATTHEW.

DOWNRIGHT. 'Sdeath, you will not draw, then?

BOBADILLA. Hold, hold, vnder thy fauour, forbeare.

DOWNRIGHT. Prate again, as you like this, you whoreson foist, you. You'le controll the point, you? Your consort is gone? had he staid, he had shar'd with you, sir.

BOBADILLA. Well, gentlemen, beare witnesse, I was bound to the peace, by this good day. (4.7.120-35)

We can hear an echo of Silver who disdained the weakness of Italian fencers as well as their rapiers: this scene resembles the episode of Saviolo and Bramble introduced by Silver; and besides, Bobadilla's naming his opponent in the Folio "Tall man," replacing Bobadilla's calling Giulliano "Signior" (4.2.111) in the Quarto version, is the phrase

that Silver frequently used to describe English fencers' stoutness.[254] In this scene, Downright challenges impatiently, full of blaspheming, whereas Bobadilla gentlemanly or cowardly refuses to draw. Just as Silver presumably desired to insist, the rapier typologically emphasizes the weakness of the Italian fencer in the sharp comparison with the strong and rude English fencer. Appealing both to the ears and eyes of the audience, their weapons as well as their ways of fighting indicate contrasting personalities.

There are also some cases where the information about the place of manufacture of the rapier is further stated. The quality of a rapier is often indicated by whether it was made in Toledo which has been famous for its high grade blades for centuries or in Flanders notorious for its bad quality, and therefore, the characteristics of its owner. Jonson writes a scene where a disguised soldier Brainworm successfully attempts to sell his Flemish cheap rapier as a Toledo to a foolish gentleman Stephen in *Every Man in his Humour*. Persuaded by the remark that "the blade may become the side, or thigh of the best prince, in *Europe*" (2.4.74-75) and that it is "a most pure *Toledo*" (2.4.80-81), Stephen expects that it will make him look princely and that "a field rapier" (2.4.92) is of greater value than one purchased in the city, but on the contrary, the counterfeit

[254] See Silver, "A Briefe Note of Three Italian Teachers of Offence," *Paradoxes* I4^{v}-K4^{v}. See also Chapter 1.

Toledo made in Flanders epitomizes his idiotic personality. In Thomas Middleton's *Blurt, Master-Constable*, Lazarillo says, "Mars armipotent with his court of guard, give sharpness to my toledo!" (2.2.287-88). Here, a Toledo is a signifier of his strength and a "roaring, tawney-faced rascal" (2.2.294).[255] It can be interpreted that it came to be necessary for these additional details to determine what kind of characteristics the rapier is supposed to represent. In accordance with its popularization, the term was gradually becoming a more general and familiar word. Even though it still evoked some specific meanings or images, it was treated as almost a synonym of the general term, sword. Therefore, the meaning or characteristics of the weapon was made clearer by these details.

In comparison with the rapier, not so many details were known about the curved sword. It appears to be derived from the unfamiliarity or the infrequency of the use of these terms in plays as well as in other written works: the mere utterance of them could have given a comparatively strong impact to the audience and efficiently represented the characteristics of their carriers without any additional information. Furthermore, some of these curved swords, such as cutlass and scimitar, sounded unfamiliar to the ears of

[255] Quotations from the play are taken from Thomas Middleton, *Blurt, Master-Constable*, *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. A. H. Bullen, vol. 1 (London, 1885) and references are to this edition.

contemporary English people. It seems likely that their unfamiliarity was utilized to amplify the remoteness or otherness of the world to which their carriers belong.

This otherness is exemplified first by the association of the curved sword with figures in the ancient and legendary world of the Mediterranean which had been literarily distant from Early Modern England and from the real world. For example, a mythic Greek hero Perseus is frequently linked with the curved blade. In *Metamorphoses*, Ovid employs the word "harpen" (5:69) to a sickle-shaped sword, for the weapon with which he severes Medusa's head and thrusts into the breast of the Assyrian Lycabas.[256] Arthur Golding, in his English translation published in 1567, applies the original Latin word, "Harpe,"[257] which is spelled with an initial capital letter but without an article as if it were a proper noun signifying Perseus' sword. Only eight lines later than this, Golding translates the word "ensis" (5:77), which simply means a sword in Latin, into "Perseus fauchon."[258] The explanatory phrase indicates that the Greek hero's sword was apt to be depicted in a curved shape like a falchion. Similarly, in *Lucans Pharsalia*, Arthur Gorge's English translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia* published

[256] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, vol. 1 (London: William Heinemann, 1946).
[257] Ovid, *The. xv. Bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis*, trans. Arthur Golding (1567) J1^{r}.
[258] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding J1^{v}.

in 1614, the Latin word "harpen" (9:676)[259] is turned into "fauchion *Harpe*" with a note in the margin that "*Perseus* with harpe, the fauchion of *Mercury*, cuts off *Medusas* head."[260] Perseus' curved sword is also introduced as one of the features of his external appearance in *The Golden Booke of the Leaden Goddess* written in 1577 by Stephen Batman, who is claimed to be a student in divinity: "Perseus had wyngs at his shoulders, a Falchion or Percian swoorde by his side, and flyinge Pegasus beatinge the grownd with his heeles"; followed by an explanation that "his sworde sygnyfieth his victorye ouer Medusa."[261] In spite of the variation of the term, all the authors constantly describe Perseus' sword with a curved blade.

The curved sword is also associated with some other Mediterranean figures, such as Caesar, who is illustrated with his falchion in *Love's Labour's Lost* and in *Caesar and Pompey*, or Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, who Æneus reports murdered Priamus with his "faulchions poynt" (2.1.229) in Christopher Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. In addition to that, it is interesting that this association also explains the design of "Korallensäbel (Kordelatsch)," a ceremonial sword with a single-edged curving blade and a coralline hilt, preserved in the collection of arms and armour in the New Imperial

---

[259] Lucan, *Lucan: With an English Translation by J. D. Duff: The Civil War* (1928, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957).
[260] Lucan, *Lvcans Pharsalia: Containing the Civill Warres between Cæsar and Pompe*, trans. Sir Arthur Gorges (1614) Mm2^{r-v}. The same word "harpen" (9.662, 663) is also translated into "glaine" (Mm2^{r}), probably a misspelling of "glaive"?
[261] Stephen Batman, *The Golden Booke of the Leaden Goddes* (London, 1577) E4^{v}, F1^{r}.

Palace in Vienna. Christian Beaufort-Spontin and Matthias Pfaffenbichler say that this shape of blade was mistaken as the classical Roman form and was therefore carried by one equipped *alla romanaa*, a fantastic and antique armoury, which was much favoured in the sixteenth century court, especially in plays.[262] The form of the curving sword, therefore, appealed to the taste for the antique Mediterranean world.

Mythic female warriors, Amazons, are also often portrayed with curved swords, especially with scimitars. For example, Edmund Spencer describes an Amazon Radigund with a scimitar in *The Faerie Queene*: "Vppon her thigh her Cemitare was tide, / With an embrodered belt of mickell pride" (5.5.3).[263] Henry Peacham also notes in the margin of his *Coach and Sedan*: "The Amazons fought on horsebacke, with Bowes and Arrowes, & their Semitars."[264] John Upton reports that "I have seen at Wilton, among my Lord Pembroke's collection, a figure of an Amazonian defending herself with a sword against an horseman."[265] However, their traditional accoutrements do not normally include swords, but bows, spears, crescent-shaped shields, and battle-axes invented by Penthesilea, the Amazonian queen killed by Achilles in the

---

[262] Christian Beaufort-Spontin and Matthias Pfaffenbichler, *Meisterwerke der Hofjagd-und Rüstkammer* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 2005) 124.
[263] *The Works of Edmund Spenser*, vol. 5.
[264] Henry Peacham, *Coach and Sedan, pleasantly disputing* (London, 1636) C1^{r}.
[265] John Upton, note on V.v.iii.4, *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, ed. Upton. 1758 (qtd. in *The Faerie Qveene: Book V*, *The Works of Edmund Spenser*, eds. Edwin Greenlaw, et. al. 200).

Trojan war. In applying a sword to Amazons, there must have been some mixture of images of female figures holding a sword, such as Fortuna or Tyche, Justice or Astraea, Diana or Artemis, and so forth. There is a likelihood that these female figures were not necessarily differentiated accurately in every particular so long as they held a masculine weapon in their hand.

What is interesting here is that different shapes of the blade are applied to different figures in their depictions. On the one hand, the sword carried by Justice who allegorically preserves the legal order has a straight blade. On the other hand, those associated with the huntress goddess Artemis or Diana as well as Amazons have curving shapes: in fact, the curving shape like the crescent moon is the emblem of Artemis or Diana and it is also the form more apt to be related to Amazons, as is exemplified by their moon-shaped shield. A curved line or the moon sometimes becomes a symbolic representation of femininity. In this sense, it can be said that a weapon in a curved shape can represent both sexes at the same time; that is, a weapon, which is normally considered “masculine,” can be considered extremely “feminine,” when it has a curved line. Furthermore, it can also be assumed that the type of weapon signified the danger of perverting woman who went beyond the role of women and threatened the social order of men, such as Amazons as well as Artemis or Diana who changed Actaeon into a stag

to be killed by his own hounds.[266] Assuming that a picture of or a reference to these female warriors evoked the strangeness of women transgressing the patriarchal social order of the contemporary England, it can be interpreted that the extreme masculine weapon in such a feminine line was regarded as an attribute of these dangerous perverting women.[267] Kathryn Schwarz interestingly correlates Amazons' ambiguity in terms of sexual identities with their remoteness: "they catalyze unexpected ways of thinking about the intersection of the sexual and the social: in placing Amazons at the beginning of time or at the edge of the world, texts open up a space in which identity can be understood differently."[268] Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton argue that we can "trace how Amazon women are located first in Asia, and then later in Africa and the New World."[269] These ideas and desires to place them on the margin is assumed to result in the curved shape of Amazonian weapons.

---

[266] As for the perverseness of Justice, Winfried Schleiner, who argues the sword of Justice in pictures of Elizabeth I, points out that "[i]t is unlikely that the beholders of such allegorical pictures always contented themselves with simply decoding the meaning of the emblem, reading the sword as "justice" and connecting its female bearer with Astraea…. the "male" weapon in the hand of a woman sometimes seemed incongruous enough to stimulate speculations about the role of the sexes." (Winfried Schleiner, "'*Divina virago': *Queen Elizabeth as an Amazon," *Studies in Philology* 75. 2 (1978): 167).

[267] See also Celeste Turner Wright, "The Amazons in Elizabethan Literature," *Studies in Philology* 37. 3 (1940): 433-56; and Kathryn Schwarz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2000).

[268] Kathryn Schwarz 4.

[269] Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton, eds., *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 4.

The female warriors were also visually differentiated from their male opponents in their attire including falchions in *A Mask of Amazons* and *A Mask of Knights*, which were performed on 11th January in 1579 at the Court in the presence of Elizabeth I and the French Ambassador, M. de Simier. The Spanish ambassador Bernardino de Mendoza writes that it was "an entertainment in imitation of a tournament, between six ladies and a like number of gentlemen, who surrendered to them."[270] Whether or not he understood the "six ladies" represented Amazons, his letter shows that it was obvious to the spectators' eye that the division of the warriors was made according to their gender. The imitation of a tournament between female and male warriors may have attached a sexual connotation to the pompous masks. The presence of the queen and De Simier, the agent of Elizabeth's suitor Alençon, increases the possibility that this mask had a political purpose concerning her marriage: supposing that, as Winfried Schleiner notes, the Amazons were intended to compare with the queen and the knights with Alençon, it is conceivable that the surrender of the male side suggests the power relationship between them by marriage. Though the image of Amazons was not favoured as a simile of Elizabeth I, it was comparatively frequently employed after the Armada in 1588 in a

[270] A letter of "Bernardino de Mendoza to Zayas" (15 Jan. 1579), *Calender of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs, Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas*, ed. Martin A. S. Hume, vol. 2 (London, 1894) 630.

"good" sense in order to glorify her extraordinary martial victory, or a woman's triumph over men.[271]

As for weapons for the six Amazons, the Revels Account describes them as "Antick ffawcheons and shield*es* with A devise painted theron and Iavelin*ges* in their hand*es*" and "bowes in their hand*es* and quivers of Arrowes at their girdles," whereas those for the six knights as "truncheons in their hand*es* guylte and guylded sheild*es* with A posey written on every of them their showes of gold Lawne tyncell and co*m*myng in w*i*th one before them."[272] It is probable that the weapons carried by the knights were ordinary swords, as the payment for painting swords are recorded.[273] Whatever intentions lay concealed behind the masks, weapons also contributed to such a females versus males stage tournament. The curving shape of the Amazons' weapons, like falchions, bows, and possibly shields, was intended to represent their feminine quality, their antiquity, and possibly their extraordinary warlike power overcoming men in a "good" sense.

The curved sword is not only connected to these Mediterranean figures but also to those in the ancient British Isles. As mentioned above, St. Patrick had a cutlass or a falchion which he thrusted into the breast of one of the Satyrs in Richard Johnson's *The*

[271] Schleiner 163-64.
[272] Feuillerat, *Elizabeth* 286-87.
[273] Feuillerat, *Elizabeth* 294.

Most Famous History of the Seueen Champions of Christendom.[274] His cumbersome curved weapon emphasizes his extraordinary or divine ability to defeat a monster in the very distant past.

When it comes to ancient pagan inhabitants in the same isles, figures with the same kind of sword are depicted not in awe but in contempt. What was aimed at by displaying the image of the curved shape is likely to be the differentiation of the contemporary English people from their own predecessors. Five engravings of ancient Picts and early Britons were engraved by the Flemish engraver Theodore de Bry based on John White's drawings, for the first volume of his America series of illustrated voyages, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, which was translated from Latin into English by Thomas Hariot and which "made such images visible all over Europe."[275] The sword of these ancient English figures [see fig.8], whether it is male or female, is illustrated in the shape of a curved sword and noted as "a cimeterre or turkie soorde"[276] or "a croket soorde"[277] in the narratives.

[274] Richard Johnson L4^{r}.
[275] Loomba and Burton 175.
[276] Thomas Hariot, trans., *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1590) E1^{v}.
[277] Hariot E4^{v}.

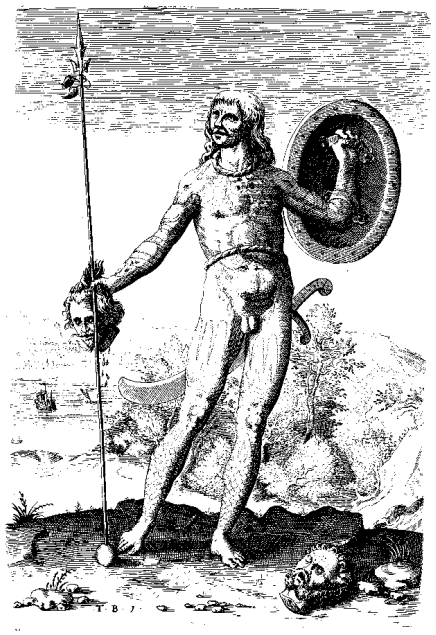

Fig. 8 "The trvve pictures of one: Picte I," engraving from Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1590) E2^{r}.

It may appear odd that these figures which seem to have no connection with the New World are entered among the illustrations of the native Americans, but according to Loomba and Burney, comparisons between them were frequently made in the period, such as the statement of William Strachey that native Americans painted their body "as the *Britaynes* died themselues redd with woad."[278] It seems likely that these comparisons helped to establish the identity of the contemporary English people. The purpose of the seemingly odd entries of the ancient Britons is stated as "to showe how that the Inhabitants of the great Bretannie haue bin in times past as sauuage[s] as those[s] of Virginia."[279] In this juxtaposition of inhabitants in the two worlds, the ancestors in the ancient British Isles, living naked in woods and painting their body, were asserted to

[278] William Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania (1612)*, eds. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund (London, 1953) 70. It is noted that "Strachey is wrong about woad, which was blue, not red" (Wright and Freund's note 6 in page 70).
[279] Hariot E1^{r}.

be as barbarous and savage as those in the present New World and fairly different from their civilized descendants in the contemporary England. Furthermore, the choice of massive curved swords meets with the purpose to display their remoteness.

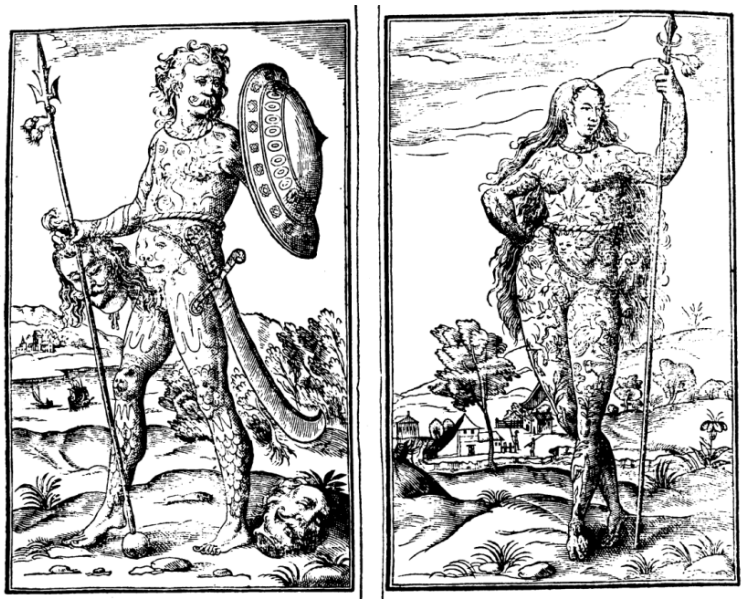

Fig. 9 "The portraitures and paintings of the ancient Britaines," a woodcut from John Speed's *The History of Great Britaine* (1611) Rr2^{v}.

Similar sword images can also be seen in the drawings of ancient Britons in John Speed's *The History of Great Britaine* [see fig.9], which were apparently copied from De Bry's engravings. The sense of remoteness from the contemporary is connoted in Speed's notion that they were "being doubtlesse, *a most warlike Nation*, (as their posterity haue euer since proued,) and *most desirous to spill blood*, wherein yet their Ofspring by diuine blessing are now most different from their Ancestors." [280] The author describes that their swords were "but short, *hanging at their naked sides*."[281] It is

[280] John Speed, *The History of Great Britaine* (1611) Rr2^{v}-Qq1^{v}.
[281] Speed Qq1^{v}.

interesting that even though all the information in the narrative specifies their "short" length and therefore no reference to their shape is given, the depicted swords remain fairly long and curving like those in the original engravings. It seems to suggest that this shape gives them a barbarous or wild appearance that was believed to suit these figures. In comparison with them, the blade of the sword worn as a symbol of the monarch is usually depicted as a straight one; all the British kings from Edward the Confessor to Edward VI in the same book are portrayed with straight swords.[282] It may signify that these kings were no more regarded as distant as those ancestors carrying curved swords.

The curved sword is also strongly linked with exotic figures, especially Turks, Persians, and Moors. The crescent moon shape as a badge of Turks could also explain this association with the exotic world. There are frequent indications of this association in books dealing with the Orient: for example, in above-mentioned *A Notable History of the Saracens*, swords of Turks are called "Turkes Falchions."[283] In *The History of the Warres betweene the Turkes and the Persians*, the popular chronicle of Giovanni Tommaso Minadoi translated into English by Abraham Harvell in 1595, the scimitar is a war-like sword of some peoples in the Eastern world, such as the people of Mesopotamia "accustomed to the vse of the Scimitarre"; the Cilicians "armed with

[282] See also the portraits of the English monarchs in *A Brief Abstract of the Genealogie of all the Kynges of England*, c.1560.
[283] Curio Ff2[r].

Scimitarre, battele axe, and bow"; Persians; and Drusians,[284] that is, the people of the Druse, "[O]ne of a political and religious sect of Muslim origin, inhabiting the region round Mount Lebanon."[285] Michel de Montaigne in his *Essays* also alludes to the term "cimeterre"[286] as a Turkish sword of the ultimate and ruthless punishment Emperor Mohammad II often practiced. The executioner had men's bodies cut into two parts at the diaphragm with a single blow so that they would die two deaths at once and both parts of them would move for a long time afterwards as if they were in lingering torment. In its English version published in 1613, John Florio translated the original term as: "a Cimitary or broad Persian Sword."[287] The briefly added word "Persian" would have well explained the bending shape of its blade. In Andrea Cambini's *Two Very Notable Commentaries: the One of the Originall of the Turcks and Empire of the House of Ottomanno*, the weapon of the Albanian hero Scanderbeg has a distinctive curving shape: "the sworde that Scanderbeg strake the beste with was a Scimitar bending lyke vnto a falchion."[288] Instead of the ones frequently breaking in fighting, one magnificent Italian master made him "thre Scimitaries, not onely good, but

---

[284] Minadoi E4^{r}, L3^{r}, Pp4^{r}.
[285] "Druse^{2}," def., *OED*.
[286] Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, Tome II (Paris: Garnier, 1962) 105.
[287] Michel de Montaigne, *Essayes*, trans. John Florio, book 2 (1613) Ll5^{r}.
[288] Andrea Cambini, *Two Very Notable Commentaries: The One of the Originall of the Turcks and Empire of the House of Ottomanno, written by A. Cambine, and thother of the warres of the Turcke against G. Scanderbeg, prince of Epiro, tr. Oute of Italian by Iohn Shute* (1562) Ff1^{r}.

excellent" with which he did "great actes against y enemies of the catholique faythe, in the honor and seruice of the almightie God."[289] Although he is not a pagan but a Christian hero, his fight against Turks would have been fit to the weapon associated with the exotic world.

This association was also utilized in entertainments or performances in Early Modern England. The chronicles of Edward Hall, *The Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke*, published in 1548, records a banquet on Shrove Sunday in 1510 where the king and nobles appeared in disguse of foreign figures, which was very popular in revels. Hall illustrates that Henry VIII and Henry Bourchier, the Earl of Essex, wore two scimitars as part of the luxurious Turkish-like garments: "his grace with the Erle of Essex, came in appareled after Turkey fashiō, in long robes of Bawdkin, powdered with gold, hattes on their heddes of Crimosyn Ueluet, with greate rolles of Gold, girded with two swordes called Cimiteries, hangyng by greate bawderikes of gold."[290] While as Janette Dillon notes, "it is difficult to know how closely these [different national costumes] may or may not have coincided with Tudor English conceptions and stereotypes for the same countries,"[291] the employment

[289] Cambini Ff1^{r}.
[290] Edward Hall, *The Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke* (1548) AAa6^{v}.
[291] Janette Dillon, *Performance and Spectacle in Hall's Chronicle* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 2002) 183.

of the curved sword as the Turkish sword and the author's choice of the word "Cimiteries" give us a hint as to the association. The 1555 inventory of the Revels Office contains sword properties employed in *A Mask of Turks Magistrates with Turks Archers* performed at the Court in February 1555: "vj turkeye fawchens of woode the haftes and chapes gylte and the scabard*es* of grene vellat" for six Turkish magistrates and "vj ffawchons of tree the haftees & scabbard garnnysshed with Collo*u*rs and lease gowlde" for six Turkish archers.[292] The curving shape of falchions was utilized as a way to visualize the nationality of these figures.

Furthermore, in the dramatic works performed in the public theatres, the curved sword was used as an indication or emphasis of the exotic and Oriental nature of its bearer, such as the falchion of Balthasar in *The Spanish Tragedy* mentioned in the previous chapter, the cutlass of Marlowe's Tamburlaine, the scimitar of Shakespeare's Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* and the Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice*, and so forth. A reference to curved swords of exotic figures in literary works meant more than the historical fact: these moon-shaped swords associated with pagans inspire the fantastic power to construct the Oriental world which was physically as well as culturally distant from their own world. In other words, similar to the case of ancient

[292] Feuillerat, *Edward VI and Mary* 181, 182.

Britons' swords, it also means for them to establish their identity in comparison with the inhabitants of distant worlds.

In this sense, the "curtle-axe" which Marlowe gave to Tamburlaine, the mighty martial hero in Asia, is a fairly appropriate weapon. In both parts of *Tamburlaine the Great*, the cutlass is the sword suited to his characteristics and always depicted as an absolutely masculine weapon symbolizing his conquering power and prowess. In the first part, there are two references to the term both of which are mentioned by Tamburlaine and dramatically represent him as a mighty conqueror of the world. He makes the first allusion when wooing Zenocrate who contemptuously calls him "Shepheard" (1.2.7) and says that "If as thou seem'st, thou art so meane a man" (1.2.8). In an attempt to overturn the estimation of himself and show his aspiration, he casts aside his weeds, the garments for shepherds, and shows off his arms and armour instead:

> I am a Lord, for so my deeds shall proove,
>
> And yet a shepheard by my Parentage:
>
> ……
>
> Lie here ye weedes that I disdaine to weare,
>
> [*Takes off shepherds cloak.*]
>
> This compleat armor, and this curtle-axe

Are adjuncts more beseeming *Tamburlaine*. (1.2.34-35, 41-43)

The change of costume symbolically indicates his self-assertion of his ability to be a "Lord" and "terrour to the world" (1.2.38). J. S. Cunningham analyzes that such a symbolic change of costume was "to acknowledge, and at a stroke to fulfil, one heroic and dramatic imperative. The actor *becomes* the role. By this means, Tamburlaine enacts that perfect correspondence between the being he is and the figure he makes."[293] His resolute determination of selecting those wartime apparels including his cutlass is equal to his refusal to "accept the lowly status imposed in those roles"[294] and his declaration to be a mighty and threatening conqueror which will be gained in war. As Martin Wiggins says, "[t]his must have been a startling assertion in 1587" when the play was first performed.[295] The remoteness of his status made it possible to show such a transgressing ambition to challenge the social hierarchy.

He next alludes to the word when he sets his army to the battle with Persia. His cutlass obviously symbolizes his extraordinary or transcendent military power:

COSROE. Come, *Tamburlain[e]*, now whet thy winged sword

And lift thy lofty arme into the cloudes,

---

[293] J. S. Cunningham, introduction, *Tamburlaine the Great*, by Christopher Marlowe, ed. Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981) 50.
[294] Martin Wiggins, *Shakespeare and the Drama of his Time* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000) 37.
[295] Wiggins 37.

That it may reach the King of *Perseas* crowne,

And set it safe on my victorious head.

TAMBURLAINE. See where it is, the keenest Cutle-axe,[296]

That ere made passage thorow Persean Armes.

These are the wings shall make it flie as swift,

As dooth the lightening, or the breath of heaven:

And kill as sure as it swiftly flies. (2.3.51-59)

His "winged" cutlass associated with the lightning or the breath of heaven conveys a hint of the theme of "scourge of God," which is one of many variants of Tamburlaine's declaration in his sources that he is the wrath of God.[297] In this sense, the cutlass he mentions signifies his role as a god-like scourge to the world, though his aim is not to obey God but to satisfy his aspiration for absolute power. He proves his ability as he claimed when he subdues his enemy with his great military strength and overturns his ill-reputation as a petty thief by returning back the fair crown to the Persian king Mercetes whom he reversely esteems as a "fearful coward" (2.4.16) and therefore "no

[296] The form "Cutle-axe" in the earlier editions which was collated in the third octavo published in 1597 is probably a mistake, as Bowers says. He notes that it is "an acceptable although uncommon form…. However, it is a tossup whether the compositor here has not omitted a letter, for it is 'Curtle-ax' elsewhere in the play." (Bowers 1:222).

[297] J. S. Cunningham and Eithne Henson, introduction, *Tamburlaine the Great*, by Christopher Marlowe, eds. Cunningham and Henson (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1998) 8.

match for mightie *Tamburlaine*" (2.4.40). Thus, in the first part, the cutlass is a symbolic tool of his great ambition and his extraordinary martial ability by which the social order of the whole world was threatened and startled.

In the second part of *Tamburlaine*, where he has already established his status as the mighty conqueror, there are also two references to the weapon. While the cutlass similarly shows off Tamburlaine's absolute mightiness and strength, its exhibition is given not to all the world but to his own sons. First, hearing the report of Zenocrate, his wife, that their youngest son Celebinus bestrides a Scythian steed well, he gladly announces to the son that he will bestow "shield and lance, / Armour of proofe, horse, helme, and Curtle-axe" (1.3.43-44). Just as when he displayed his apparel to Zenocrate in the first part, he expects that these arms and armour will play a part to determine his son's character. Additionally, they are given as Tamburlaine's seal of approval for Celebinus' legitimacy as his true son and for his initiation into the battle-field. Thus, the cutlass is one of the arms signifying "a scourge and terror to the world" (1.3.63) which he encourages each one of his sons to become in order to prove that they are not bastards but the true offspring of Tamburlaine.

Similarly, he refers to the weapon when scolding his other son Calyphas for his fearing of death and wounds in war:

Villain, art thou the sonne of *Tamburlaine*,

And fear'st to die, or with a Curtle-axe

To hew thy flesh and make a gaping wound? (3.2.95-97)

With a striking image of a cutlass embodying warlike masculinity, he shows the son his great and impressive strength and fearless courage in cutting his arm. However, unlike his father and brothers who all regard that a wound is nothing, Calyphas is a person who prefers peace to war and therefore thinks that a wound is a "pitifull sight" (3.2.131). In comparison with Calyphas' feminine weakness, the extremely masculine strength of his father is emphasized by his cutlass and a wound on his arm. Tamburlaine cannot control and conquer Calyphas' disposition until he denies the legitimacy and eventually stabs his son to his death in the name of "martiall justice" (4.1.96).[298] In witnessing this execution of Tamburlaine's son, the subjugated king of Natolia says: "Thou [Tamburlaine] shewest the difference twixt our selves and thee / In this thy barbarous damned tyranny" (4.1.138-39). It is likely to offer a typical view of Tamburlaine. What made the Asian conqueror distant from contemporary England is not only the remote and exotic locale of the play but also his exceedingly barbaric and inhumane cruelty as

[298] It is also a hint of his characteristics as a scourge of God: "Required by 'the argument of arms', in one view the execution of Calyphas also causes deep revulsion as a barbarism" (Cunningham, introduction 45).

exemplified by this incident. And the cutlass given to Tamburlaine is a weapon which connotes both of these physical and mental distances.

These examples found in the two plays may appear to be numerically too few to prove that the image of this warlike curved sword is an attribute of the Asian conqueror and it may be interpreted that the term was employed just as a convenient synonym for "sword." However, all four references to the term consistently signify the sword of Tamburlaine when he dramatically displays his quality as the scourge of the world and no other term is employed as an alternative to his sword. Additionally, the same term is never found in any other of Marlowe's surviving texts. These facts increase the possibility that the author intentionally chose the specific term in order to strengthen an impression as the Asian conqueror and as the "other."

It is likely that the association of the curved sword with Tamburlaine had a striking impact on the contemporaries of Marlowe, so that the sword's image, especially that of the cutlass, entered into the lines of other Tudor plays together with the Marlovian mightiness. As it has been admitted, contemporary playwrights including Shakespeare echo the features in their works, though the reception did not remain the same. Interestingly, Marlowe's changing influence over them is reflected in the way his representation of the cutlass of Tamburlaine was picked up in their plays.

At the first stage, the curved sword represents Tamburlaine-like overwhelming power in the battlefield, or his martial masculinity. In *The Wars of Cyrus* performed in 1588, Antiochus, a would-be conqueror, bestows on Araspas a sword with "A horse as fierce as proude Bucephalus, / Armour of trustier proofe then *Thetis* found" (1415-16) in token of his love and honour as well as of the admittance of Araspas into Antiochus' army.[299] Responding to the requirement to "fight couragiouslie" (1417), Araspas names the sword a cutlass in his speech to Antiochus:

> …when I shrinke for feare out of the field,
>
> Let me be torne in peeces with that horse,
>
> Or hewed to death with this bright cortelaux. (1422-24)

This calls to mind episodes in the second part of *Tamburlane*. The gifts listed above are similar to those conferred to Celebinus. The cutlass functions as one of the adornments in Araspas' speech which is aimed to confirm his own prowess and courage on the battlefield. These lines appear to be echoing Tamburlaine's "with a Curtle-axe / To hew thy flesh and make a gaping wound" (*2Tamb.* 3.2.96-97). While Araspas is not really torn apart or hewed, Calyphas who, as it were, "shrinke[s] for feare out of the field" is killed with Tamburlaine's sword. In addition, Araspas' speech satisfies Antiochus that he

[299] Quotations from the play are taken from *The Wars of Cyrus: An Early Classical Narrative Drama of the Child Actors*, ed. James Paul Brawner (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1942), and references are to this edition.

shall be "conquerour" (1426) which reminds us of the conquering sword of Tamburlaine.

The echo of Marlowe is more strongly heard in *Edmond Ironside*. Edmond's initial appearance in the field is represented by his wearing his arms and armour:

> Never sence Edmond was of force to beare
>
> A massey helmet and a Curtlaxe
>
> Could I [Canutes] retorn a victor from the feild…. (2.3.184-86)[300]

It again reminds us of Colebinus' initiation into the army marked by gifts from Tamburlaine. The massiveness of the helmet and cutlass emphasize Edmond's outstanding martial strength that Canutes can never defeat. Edricus also makes a reference to it as follows:

> In vaine this curtelax was reard aloft,
>
> Which made a laine throughout thie foemens troopes… (5.1.50-51)

Although Eric Sams notes that the first line resembles an expression in *Titus Andronicus*,[301] there is a higher likelihood that it echoes the dialogue cited above: that is, Cosroe's incitement that "Come, *Tamburlaine*, now whet thy winged sword / And lift

---

[300] Quotations from the play are taken from *Edmond Ironside and Anthony Brewer's The Love-sick King*, ed. Randall Martin (New York: Garland, 1991), and references are to this edition.

[301] Eric Sams's note to "curtle-axe… reared aloft" (1665), *Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside*, ed. Sams (London: Fourth Estate, 1985).

thy lofty arme into the cloudes" (*1Tamb*. 2.3.51-52) and Tamburlaine's response that "the keenest Cutle-axe, / That ere made passage thorow Persean Armes" (2.3.55-56). Thus, the Marlovian mightiness, especially of Tamburlaine, is preserved in the representation of the curved sword. However, what Edricus exhibits with the weapon will be proved to be counterfeited prowess and power. It can be interpreted as a sign of its changing idea, which will be discussed later.

The cruelty of Tamburlaine, another phase demonstrated by the curved sword is stressed in *Titus Andronicus*, when Aaron the Moor refers to the term scimitar. As it has been claimed, he is a descendant of Marlowe's Asian conqueror and the echoes of Marlowe's mighty lines are heard especially in his first soliloquy;[302] such as the utterance to the Greek mythology, the absolute malignancy like Barabas in *The Jew of Malta*, and his Tamburlaine-like aspiration towards the extreme heights in a metaphorical expression of the changing costume:

> Then, Aaron, arm thy heart and fit thy thoughts
>
> To mount aloft with thy imperial mistress,

[302] As for echoes in Aaron's first soliloquy, see M. C. Bradbrook, "Shakespeare's Recollections of Marlowe," *Shakespeare's Styles: Essays in Honour of Kenneth Muir*, eds. Philip Edwards, Inga-Stina Ewbank, and G. K. Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980) 191; Maurice Charney, "The Voice of Marlowe's Tamburlaine in Early Shakespeare," *Comparative Drama* 31.2 (1997) 214-15; James Shapiro, "'Which is *The Merchant* here, and which *The Jew*?': Shakespeare and the Economics of Influence," *Shakespeare Studies* 20 (1988) 272-73.

And mount her pitch...

.....

Away with slavish weeds and servile thoughts!

I will be bright, and shine in pearl and gold

To wait upon this new-made empress. (2.1.12-14, 18-20)

Unlike his Marlovian models, Aaron's villainous overreaching and Machiavellian quality is shared with Tamora, as Jonathan Bate claims that Shakespeare "double-splits" it "through the dual invention of Aaron the Moor and Tamora Queen of Goths," the former being an outsider and the latter a woman who is "Shakespeare's first powerfully active woman."[303] However, his malignant and fierce power does not weaken with the "double-splitting." Nicholas Brooke argues that Aaron "develops into a force capable of disturbing the orthodox order of the play."[304]

More than that, he is indeed an absolute "other" to all social systems or hierarchies, even to the one under the control of Tamora so that he will eventually become a threat to her two sons, Demetrius and Chiron, as well. In Act 4 Scene 2, Aaron, who has pretended to serve Tamora and his sons faithfully, finally reveals his blood-curdling quality to the two sons when they are going to kill the black-hued baby, the illegitimate

[303] Jonathan Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare* (London: Picador, 1997) 116.
[304] Nicholas Brooke, "Marlowe as Provocative Agent in Shakespeare's Early Plays," *Shakespeare Survey* 14 (1961) 36.

son of Tamora and Aaron. It is when he makes a reference to the term “scimitar.” He stands in the way of the murderous rapier of Demetrius in order to protect his own son. A sequence of actions and speech with the brandished scimitar, which again reminds us of Tamburlaine’s showing his sword and provoking the enemy, produces a strikingly impressive moment:

NURSE. … The Empress sends it thee, thy stamp, thy seal,

And bids thee christen it with thy dagger’s point.

……..

DEMETRIUS. I’ll broach the tadpole on my rapier’s point.

Nurse, give it me. My sword shall soon dispatch it.

AARON. Sooner this sword shall plough thy bowels up.

[*He takes the child and draws his sword*]

Stay, murderous villains, will you kill your brother?

……..

He dies upon my scimitar’s sharp point

That touches this, my first-born son and heir. (4.2.69-70, 84-87, 90-91)

In the dialogue above, points of three different kinds of swords are mentioned at the end of each line in a kind of juxtaposition. The nurse conveys Tamora’s command to stab

the baby with the "dagger's point"; Demetrius tries to thrust the babe on his "rapier's point"; and Aaron declares that he will kill alone who touches his son upon his "scimitar's sharp point." The image the cumbersome sword gives is clearly distinct from that of the other two, the short bladed dagger and the thinner bladed rapier.[305] This comparison marks his sheer strength and his overwhelming power over the nurse and Tamora's sons, who had regarded him to be subordinate to them.

His allusion to the scimitar and the accompanying action bring about the very dramatic moment of his change from a "lamb" (4.2.136) to "The chafèd boar, the mountain lioness" (4.2.137) and the moment of exposing himself as an absolute "other." He insists on the superiority of his coal-black hue which "scorns to bear another hue" (4.2.99) condemning the whiteness of Demetrius and Chiron as "ye sanguine, shallow-hearted boys, / Ye whitelimed walls, ye alehouse painted signs" (4.2.96-97). He also rejects being faithful to Tamora and declares to protect his baby: "My mistress is my mistress, this myself, / The figure and the picture of my youth" (4.2.106-7). Thus, refusing to belong to anyone other than himself, he declares his son to be his other self, that is, an "other." The baby in whose face the father's "seal be stampèd" (4.2.126) is agreed among all except for Aaron to be a representative of the "other" and a dangerous

[305] The kind of swords Demetrius and Chiron draw in Act 2 Scene 1 where they quarrel with each other over Lavinia is mentioned as rapiers. Especially Chiron's sword, which is contemptuously called "a dancing-rapier" (2.1.39), connotes his immaturity and weakness in fighting.

element which should be got rid of. However, Aaron, the "other," begins to intrude into their circle and finally reverse their position completely. As Aaron repeats the undeniable fact that the coal-black baby is their own "brother by the surer side" (4.2.125), he makes them feel inevitably involved in the villainous deeds and also makes them obey the "other" to secure their safety. The nurse asks Aaron what she should do to Tamora; and Demetrius also helplessly seeks advice from him: "Advise thee, Aaron, what is to be done, / And we will all subscribe to thy advice. / Save thou the child, so we may all be safe" (4.2.128-30). The scimitar effectively functions as a crucial tool to build up and enhance Aaron's dominating power of "otherness." This Aaron-like frightening quality of an "other" comes to form part of the representation of the curved sword hereafter. Now, the curved sword seems to preserve such Tamburlaine-like and Aaron-like "otherness" in its representation.

The term "otherness" here signifies both the physical and mental remoteness from contemporary England, and factors that decide the bearer as an "other" are, therefore, geographic and temporal distance as well as a mindset too unusual and brutal to be understood. The extreme cruelty that makes someone an "other" is figuratively expressed by a curved sword in the anonymous *King Leir and his Three Daughters* performed around four years before *Titus*. Leir describes his own elder daughters,

Gonerill and Ragan, with an image of a ruthlessly wounding falchion in a sharp contrast with the healing balsam of the youngest Cordella. For him, it seemed that they stood before him "brandishing a Faulchion in their hand, / Ready to lop a lymme off where it fell, / And in their other hands a naked poynyard, / Wherwith they stabd me in a hundred places" (1490-93) and killed him in their imagination, whereas the youngest "Came with a boxe of Balsome in her hand, / And powred it into my bleeding wounds" (1496-97). Though Gonerill and Ragan are those who are normally supposed to be farthest from the "other," their too unnaturally cruel attitude to their own old father makes each of them an "other" to him.

In another Shakespeare play, *Richard III* performed in 1592, Anne calls Richard's sword that stabbed her husband "Thy murd'rous falchion" (1.2.94). It is no matter whether his sword was really a falchion or not. The term could be a simple synonym for sword but it is also likely that the strong impact a curved falchion can convey may have influenced Shakespeare's choice of the word. Similarly, there are cases where a curved sword indicates the crucial moment when its bearer reveals his ruthlessness. D'Avila, a Spaniard in *A Larum for London* in 1596, calls his sword "my Semiter" (sc.8. 949) when he is threatening an old citizen with its point to give his daughter.[306] It is

[306] Quotations from the play are taken from *A Larum for London: 1602* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1913), and references are to this edition.

interesting that the author chose the specific term rather than another trisyllabic word, rapier, even though it is probable that the weapon the actor carried was a rapier-shaped stage property, for there are references to the term "rapier" in the stage directions. While the employment of the word may have been simply because it was a convenient trisyllabic synonym for sword, there is still the possibility to interpret that the author's choice of the word had some correlation with D'Avila's cruel characteristics.

Moreover, in Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* in 1607, the sword of Sextus, the rapist of Lucrece, is named as "his sharp-pointed scimitar" (5.1) at the most scary and woeful moment in her story when he dramatically turns from a suppliant for her favour to a tyrant who rapes her laying his sword to her naked breast.[307] The curved sword not only gives the impression of the ancient Roman world but also emphasizes the most terrifying moment she experienced when its bearer turns to be an "other." In addition to Heywood's play, Shakespeare employed the term falchion for the same rapist in his poetry of the same title, *The Rape of Lucrece*. All of the four allusions to it constantly indicate the weapon of Tarquin kindled by a lusty desire to assault her,[308] and in a stanza where her desperate state is expressed in a hunting metaphor, his falchion's blade is paralleled with a falcon and its beak aiming at a fowl below:

---

[307] Quotations from the play are taken from Thomas Heywood, *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Thomas Heywood*, ed. A. W. Verity (London: Vizetelly, 1888), and references are to this edition.

[308] See lines 176, 509, 1046, and 1626 in Shakespeare, *The Rape of Lucrece*.

This said, he shakes aloft his Roman blade,

Which like a falcon tow'ring in the skies

Coucheth the fowl below with his wings' shade

Whose crooked beak threats, if he mount he dies.

So under his insulting falchion lies

Harmless Lucretia, marking what he tells

With trembling fear, as fowl hear falcons' bells. (505-11)

It is most probable that the author chose the word and the image of the curved sword for a poetic purpose, which is explained by the similarity in sounds of "falcon" and "falchion" as well as in the curving shape of the beak and the "Roman blade." This image also describes Tarquin's wild and uncontrolled affection and Lucrece's terrified feeling under him at this moment.

The sword of Eleazer, the Moor in *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy* or *Lust's Dominion* in 1600 is an interesting example in terms of the representation of swords, for it is named both falchion and rapier. It is a play that was apparently written under a strong influence of some earlier plays, such as *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Titus Andronicus*. For example, its plot is borrowed from *Jew* and *Titus*: the villainous and Machiavellian characteristics of Eleazer resemble those of Barabas, and

the affair between Eleazer and Eugenia, the Queen of Spain, is patterned from that between Aaron and Tamora.[309] Naturally, as in Marlowe's or Shakespeare's plays mentioned above, the image of the curved sword also evokes the "otherness" of Eleazer in this play. The Moor is apparently a Marlovian and Aaron-like figure and an "other" in Spain distorting the social order committing adultery with the queen and killing the king. An echo of *Titus* is heard when the term "falchion" is mentioned. Eleazer rejects the presence of Eugenia in his house,[310] saying, "Seek no Queens here, I'le broach them if they do, / Upon my falchions point…" (1.1.137-38).[311] The same word is also mentioned again as his sword to kill the king Fernando who is going to cuckold him: "with my falchions point / I'le lance those swelling veins in which hot lust / Does keep his Revels" (2.3.147-49). However, the sword with which he really stabs the king in the name of the revenge for the murder of his wife is called a rapier instead of a falchion. Defending himself with the drawn sword against the lords who are condemning him for regicide, he says: "He that first opes his lips, I'le drive his words / Down his wide throat upon my rapiers point" (3.2.180-81). His sword turns into a straight one in the verbal

---

[309] Cyrus Hoy, *Introductions, Notes, and Commentaries to Texts in 'The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker' Edited by Fredson Bowers*, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980) 65-66.

[310] Hoy, note to "broach…point" (*Lust's Dominion* 1.1.137-8).

[311] Quotations from the play are taken from *Lust's Dominion*; *or, The Lascivious Queen. a Tragedie*, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1961), and references are to this edition.

expression where he is loudly justifying his deed. In brief, the moral or legal justifiability of using a sword in the society decides the form of the blade. Of course, there are a lot of possible factors which caused the variations. These different terms may have been employed by different authors or they may be just convenient synonyms for sword. Yet, it is not impossible to interpret that the term falchion was chosen to indicate his cruelty and "otherness," whereas the rapier his intent to claim his right to kill the king.

However, the idea of the curved sword was changing in the course of time. The mighty characteristics, absolute masculinity, or otherness of its carrier which seriously threaten the world in the play gradually came to be treated in a mocking way especially after the late 1590s. Obviously, it is partly reflected by the change in fashion of the sword at that time, for these warlike swords were becoming old-fashioned as argued in the first chapter. In addition to that, it also correlates with the way of receiving the Marlovian mightiness, which started to be parodied in the latter 1590s.

James Shapiro says of Marlowe that "the shards of his influence were beginning to emerge"[312] in 1598. He draws examples, such as Shakespeare's challenge to *Jew* in *The Merchant of Venice*, echoes of Marlowe's words in *Henry IV, Part 2* and *The Merry*

[312] James Shapiro, *Rival Playwrights: Marlowe, Jonson, Shakespeare* (New York: Columbia UP, 1991) 1.

Wives of Windsor through the garbled parodies of Pistol and Sir Hugh Evans, and allusions to Marlowe himself in *As You Like It*; as well as Jonson's early indebtedness to Marlowe the extent of which is indicated by fragments of his collaborative work influenced by Marlowe's *Edward II*, appearing in *England's Parnassus* and Jonson's unfinished *Mortimer His Fall*. According to Shapiro, Marlowe was proved to be a greater threat to the rival playwrights in his death than he had been in his lifetime. His works remained to be performed onstage and were published or circulated, as if his ghost was walking around, which is possibly connoted by the ghost in *Hamlet*. These rivals started to respond to Marlowe in a parodic way when conditions became ripe after five years of his death. Shapiro does not use the word parody in a narrow sense of burlesque or travesty, but he means that parodic recollections are "potentially intimate, as well as oppositional, paying homage to a rival's work while at the same time displacing it, revealing its outdatedness and conventionality" and that parody is "a product of authorial intention" and "a historicizing act."[313] As a result of dynamic relationships among the contemporary playwrights, Marlowe's words and characters started to appear in parodies around 1598.

On the other hand, Wiggins argues that the metaphorical death of Marlowe, the death of his mode of heroic tragedy, was in 1597 "in which Edward Alleyn, the

[313] Shapiro, *Rival Playwrights* 5-6.

thirty-year-old star most associated with Marlowe's leading roles, gave up acting."[314] There was "a reversal of genre fashion" from tragedy to comedy: "[f]or a decade after *Tamburlaine*, it had been tragedy that most excited and inspired London audiences; but in 1597, taste comprehensively turned towards comedy."[315] In the current of time, the contemporary dramatists dismissed Marlowe's way of dramatic speech, plotting or characterization. Jonson called the kind of characters created by Marlowe and Alleyn "monsters" and was hired to produce an adaptation of Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Doctor Faustus* as their original scripts "needed to be refashioned to take account of new tastes and new sensibilities."[316]

This change in the treatment of Marlowe in the late 1590s is reflected in the representation of the curved sword. The Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice*, who is known as a parodic figure of Marlovian mightiness, demonstrates his boasting quality in his "heroic" speech where he makes a reference to the scimitar immediately before proceeding to the three caskets:

> Even for that I thank you.
>
> Therefore I pray you lead me to the caskets
>
> To try my fortune. By this scimitar,

[314] Wiggins 56.
[315] Wiggins 56-57.
[316] Wiggins 56.

That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince

That won three fields of Sultan Suleiman,

I would o'erstare the sternest eyes that look,

Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,

Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,

Yea, mock the lion when a roars for prey,

To win the lady. (2.1.22-31)

It is an allusion to the series of wars which occurred between Turkey and Persia in the sixteenth century. The scimitar, by which he makes a vow, plays an important part in his great enterprise in these wars where he kills "the Sophy," the ruler of Persia, as well as "a Persian prince." As Samuel C. Chew points out, it is obvious that his report is not exactly based on a historical fact, for "no Sophy was slain by anyone in any of the Turco-Persian wars."[317] It is unlikely that Morocco's inaccurate report enhances his boasting personality, for Shakespeare is not very faithful to historical facts and the audience was most probably unaware of history. Yet, his idiotic personality as a braggart is shown in his ridiculously proud and self-satisfied way of talking about his exotic

[317] Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford UP, 1937) 254.

bravery and glorious achievement and is effectively stressed by mentioning the term scimitar.

In addition to that, his ridiculousness can also be interpreted in the light of the similarity between him and Marlovian heroes, especially Tamburlaine, from whom the characteristics of Morocco are claimed to be originated. Brooke asserts that Morocco "has no doubt reference to other Eastern heroes derived from Tamburlaine, but the quality of it is Tamburlaine's alone" and "derives his nature and his utterance from Tamburlaine."[318] Moreover, analogies can be found between their speeches. Maurice Charney refers to the "pattern of exotic geographical references that we find in *Tamburlaine*,"[319] and M. C. Bradbrook points to "[t]he dancing rhythm… modelled on Tamburlaine's speech at the death of Zenocrate."[320] Referring to names of heroes and gods in ancient Greek myths, "Hercules and Lichas" (2.1.32), or an allegorical figure, "blind Fortune leading me" (2.1.36), Morocco sites himself among them when he is going to choose the casket, as Tamburlaine often does when he is raising morale before going to wars. Nevertheless, his "mighty" lines do not have the same "mighty" effects as Tamburlaine's. His lines, "like Morocco himself, seem oddly out of place in this

[318] Brooke 42.
[319] Charney 217.
[320] Bradbrook 191.

romantic comedy"[321] and only emphasize his quality as one of the "old-fashioned, outmoded heroes."[322]

The reference to the scimitar, which is as cumbersome and warlike as Tamburlaine's cutlass, is accordingly able to be argued as one of the parodies on Marlovian lines. Tamburlaine, immediately before the battle with Turkey, swears by his own sword to defeat Bajazeth, the king of the Turks, which will allow him to become well-known all over the world: "By this my sword that conquer'd *Persea*, / Thy fall shall make me famous through the world" (*1Tamb.*3.3.83-84). His self-dependent way of fighting is well emphasized in comparison with his opponent's swearing: "By *Mahomet*, my Kinsmans sepulcher, / And by the holy *Alcaron*" (3.3.76-77). On the other hand, Morocco swears self-dependently like Tamburlaine "By this scimitar, / That slew the Sophy, and a Persian prince" (2.1.24-25), but fails to "win the lady" (2.1.31). It is a mocking imitation of the provocation of Marlowe's Asian hero. Furthermore, the pronoun "this" in both of the vows of Tamburlaine and Morocco indicates that some actions with the sword, such as brandishing it or pointing at it, may have been undertaken when each of the actors spoke the phrase, even though there is no stage direction in either text. Bearing in mind that he is a wooer to Portia, there is a strong

[321] Shapiro, 'Which is *The Merchant* here, and which *The Jew*?' 273.
[322] Charney 218.

likeliness that his dramatic action of exhibiting his scimitar to her and to the audience is also a parody of Tamburlaine's taking off his "weeds" and displaying his "complete armor and this curtle-axe" (1.2.42) before Zenocrate. However, unlike Tamburlaine, Morocco is just a would-be hero and unsuccessful wooer to Portia. His exhibition of his scimitar, by which he attempts to demonstrate his strength and prowess on the battle-field, in fact stresses his ridiculousness and old-fashioned or mock heroism.

In Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the cutlass is the sword of French gallants mentioned by the Constable before the battle with England when he is strongly convinced of the victory of the French, for their army outnumber the English and are full of energy, whereas the English soldiers are exhausted and starved. The French completely underestimate the military power of their enemy, so that he predicts as follows:

> Scarce blood enough in all their sickly veins
>
> To give each naked curtal-axe a stain
>
> That our French gallants shall today draw out
>
> And sheathe for lack of sport. (4.2.20-23)

Shakespeare's choice of the word "curtal-axe" here is likely to be borrowed from an anonymous play, *The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth: Containing the Honourable Battell of Agin-court*, one of the major sources of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. We can draw

a parallel between them: in *Famous Victories*, the words "flaunching Curtleaxes" are uttered right before the speech of the king Henry to his army by a French captain who disdains the "womanly king of England," though unlike in *Henry V* the weapon is not applied to the whole of French soldiers but only to Normans.[323] Additionally, the adjective "flaunching" indicates the showiness or curved shape of the cutlass.[324] It can be assumed that Shakespeare may have employed the image of the "flaunching Curtleaxes" and developed it with the blood image. In the speech of Shakespeare's Constable, the real battle is treated as a sport of hunting and the stain of blood is predicted to be given to the cutlasses of the French gallants as if it were decoration or gilt on them. He utilizes the image of a cutlass with decorative blood in order to picture the frivolous and boasting French soldiers.

The image of the blood on the sword can be a prize of victory and show the subjugation of the enemy. Edward and Montague at the opening scene of *Henry VI, Part Three* proudly display the blood of the enemy conventionally on their swords as a token of their bravery, though it is pointed out that it may be on their clothes, bodies, or other

---

[323] Anon., *The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth: Containing the Honourable Battell of Agin-court* (London, 1598) E3^{v}.

[324] The adjective "flaunching" is noted as "Flaunting? (showy, gay)" by Joseph Quincy Adams (*The Famovs Victories of Henry the Fifth*, *Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas: A Selection of Plays Illustrating the History of the English Drama from its Origin down to Shakespeare*, ed. Adams (London: George G. Harrap, 1924) 684). But it is also possible to interpret that it means curving like a flanch, "A sub-ordinary formed on each side of the shield by a line arched or convex towards the centre, always borne double or in pairs" ("flanch," def., *n.*[1], *OED*).

weapons instead.[325] Similarly, the victory against York is expressed by the image of the blood of his son, Rutland, which "valiant Clifford with his rapier's point / Made issue" (*3H6.* 1.4.81-82) and stained Margaret's napkin with.[326] On the other hand, the blood which would not deserve to stain the blade can be insult and contemptuous. For example, Othello scornfully commands, "Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust 'em" (*Oth.* 1.2.60), on which Norman Sanders notes that "Othello's scorn is that of professional fighter towards civilian brawlers."[327] Similarly, the remark of Aumerle in *Richard II* that "I say thou liest, / And will maintain what thou hast said is false / In thy heart blood, though being all too base / To stain the temper of my knightly sword" (*R2*. 4.1.25-28) expresses his pride as a knight and the baseness of the falsehood.

In this line of idea, in *Henry V*, the Constable's reference to cutlasses and the blood on them like an ornamental element is an expression of scorn for the feebleness of English soldiers in the full conviction of their victory before they start fighting. However, unlike Tamburlaine whose winged cutlass really makes passage through his enemy, those of the French gallants cannot bring about the victory. It is predicted by Henry ironically using the hunting image: "The man that once did sell the lion's skin /

---

[325] Martin, note to "behold… blood" (*3H6* 1.1.13-14).
[326] Its blood image is supposed to be taken from Hieronimo's bloodstained cloth as a reminder of his murdered son in *The Spanish Tragedy*, as Martin notes to "napkin" (*3H6* 1.4.79), though it indicates almost the opposite meaning.
[327] Norman Sanders, note to "dew" (1.2.59) in *Othello*, by William Shakespeare, ed. Sanders (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984).

While the beast lived, was killed with hunting him" (*H5* 4.3.94-95). In the play's construction of the binary opposition between the French and the English, the cutlass is a weapon which represents the aristocratic and frivolous French defeated by the English, the lion. And the image of a cutlass indicates that the mightiness and strength the French self-consciously boast of is no more than their own overestimation.

Looking at two other examples of the cutlass appearing in the plays of the beginning of the seventeenth century, the weapon is no more like the conquering and gallant sword of Tamburlaine. In *How a Man may Choose a Good Wife from a Bad*, the cutlass is the weapon belonging to Brabo, a swaggerer and confederate in the plot of Mary, Arthur's second wife, who tries to capture her husband on a charge of murder of his former wife in order to obtain his property. He displays his "Curtelax" (2476),[328] when falsely pretending to be a strong and righteous man and condemning Arthur. In *The Wit of a Woman*, the character a cutlass belongs to is Bragardo, a ruffian. He goes to Balia's house trying to be revenged when he finds young men at a wedding. The result is on the contrary: he is beaten up and miserably has his wig and false beard stolen. It is in this poor appearance that he utters the term: "but that I bestirred me with my curtilax, I had

[328] Quotations from the play are taken from *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad*, ed. A. E. H. Swaen (Louvain: Uystprusyst, 1912), and references are to this edition.

neuer come away aliue, but I will be reuenged on this house" (1669-70).[329] Interestingly, the kind of sword he mentions in the earlier part of the play is a rapier: "How hanges my rapier? point blanke, or falles it not to Lowe? I doubt my hangers are somewhat to short" (882-83). These swords similarly indicate his ridiculousness respectively: the rapier worn in an unusual way emphasizes his foolish apparel, while his cutlass stresses his ridiculously boasting characteristic. The choice of the word, rapier or "curtilax," may indicate the author's intention. By this period, the value of the cutlass is completely degraded to the sword of a person who does not deserve to be respected.

When the term "curtal-axe" is referred to in *As You Like It* in 1599, it is a sword belonging to Rosalind, a female character in man's clothes.[330] It is one of the tools to disguise her as the boy Ganymede, or to bring him into existence. The weapon turns to represent "feminine masculinity" here:

> Were it not better,
>
> Because that I am more than common tall,
>
> That I did suit me all points like a man,

[329] Quotations from the play are taken from *The Wit of a Woman 1604*, ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1913), and references to this edition.

[330] This is a play in which there is an allusion to Marlowe and his line from *Hero and Leander* (1.176): "Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might: / 'Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?'" (*AYL.* 3.5.82-83). Marlowe's lyric, "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love," was well known and drew a number of verse replies (Michael Hattaway, note to *AYL* 3.6.80-81, *As You Like It*, by William Shakespeare, ed. Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000)). Shakespeare must have been conscious about his predecessor when writing this play.

A gallant curtal-axe upon my thigh,

A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart,

Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will.

We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,

As many other mannish cowards have,

That do outface it with their semblances. (1.3.108-16)

Rosalind employs the two weapons, a "gallant curtal-axe" and a "boar-spear," in order to have "a swashing and a martial outside." Wearing weapons is the same method for cross-dressing as Portia's wearing her "dagger with the braver grace" (*MV* 3.4.65) when she comes up with the idea of disguising herself as Balthasar in order to confront the crisis of the best friend of her husband. However, the much larger and heavier sword of Rosalind in comparison with Portia's projects the far more pressing necessity for her to perform the other gender and deceive the others hiding her womanly nature in her heart. For the purpose of self-protection in the wood of Arden, she intentionally tries to activate the inconsistency of the outward appearance and the inward quality. In this sense, the two weapons can be tools to advertise "Rosalind's 'masculinity'"[331] as well as "tokens of virginity."[332]

[331] Juliet Dusinberre, note to "boar-spear" (1.3.115), *As You Like It*, by William Shakespeare, ed. Dusinberre (London: Thomson Learning, 2006).
[332] Hattaway, note to 1.3.107-8.

The cutlass can also be a representation of a perverting woman such as the Amazonian curved sword analyzed above. Indeed, the phrase, "A gallant curtal-axe upon my thigh," reminds us of the above-mentioned description of the Amazonian queen Radigund in *The Faerie Queene*: "Vppon her thigh her Cemitare was tide" (5.5.3). By declaring to arm her female self with masculine weapons like the legendary female warrior, she makes herself stand right on the border of both sexes transgressing the sexual role in society. Her hermaphroditic attribute is also indicated in her own description of her swashing and martial outside as that of "many other mannish cowards": the usage of the term "mannish" indicates the masculinity of a woman. Now, it can be said that she retains some features of both sexes, but at the same time does not completely belong to either of them. In other words, she becomes an "other" to both sexes. The utterance to the cutlass plays a part to make herself an "other" and ready to enter the wood remote from the civilized world.

Notwithstanding her costume, the deficiency of her "masculinity" is repeatedly stressed in the play. In the scene where she appears for the first time in her male costume, she says:

> I could find in my heart to disgrace my man's apparel and to cry like a woman. But I must comfort the weaker vessel, as doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat; therefore, courage, good Aliena!
>
> (2.4.3-6)

As Catherine Belsey argues, it may indicate her psychological transformation from Rosalind into Ganymede and her escape from the limitations of Rosalind's femininity,[333] but her attempt or effort rather works as a reminder of the fact that she is actually a woman just disguised in man's clothes and consequently emphasizes her femininity on the contrary. Furthermore, her state of inner self is not always compatible with her outer appearance and, especially when she is considering Orlando who her feminine desire is bound to, her attitude is, to use the phrase of Barbara Hodgdon, "outing" her feminine character and her "hidden" desire.[334] Her feminine feature is exposed in her excessive speech,[335] in her faint upon seeing her lover's blood, and in the outer appearance of Ganymede described thus: "The boy is fair, / Of female favour, and bestows himself / Like a ripe sister" (4.3.84-86).

---

[333] Catherine Belsey, "Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and Gender in the Comedies," *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis (London: Methuen, 1985) 182.
[334] Barbara Hodgdon, "Sexual Disguise and the Theatre of Gender," *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*, ed. Alexander Leggatt (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 184.
[335] Hodgdon 183.

Thus, the gallant cutlass as part of her masculine costume functions to stress both her outward masculinity and inward femininity, both of which dispute each other. At the denouement, she finally casts off her masculine attire and exhibits herself in completely feminine dress. Her change of costume, contrary to Tamburlaine's, signifies her self-assertion that she will return from the "other" back to one belonging to the society. In other words, unlike Marlowe's Asian hero or Amazons, her transgressive quality does not seriously threaten or shake the social order but is compatible with it at the happy ending.[336]

As has been examined, the image of rapiers and curved swords in poetic expressions contribute to the representation of their bearers' characteristics. This chapter has attempted to grasp the tendency how specific terms are employed for what kind of characters on the whole and follow the chronological shifting image of each swords, especially focusing on the curved swords in correlation with the change in the nature of Marlowe's influence on contemporary plays. There are some specific impacts and impressions that only the curved sword could give either verbally or visually, which has

[336] The Amazonian image was not much employed in the pictures of Elizabeth I, for she preferred a representation as a peaceful monarch to that as a martial queen. It is assumed that the tendency to depict her with the Amazonian image after the victory over the Spanish Armada came to decrease after some time. It may also have been reflected in the representation of Rosalind's masculinity.

been made clearer in comparison with the rapier. Its uniqueness is well described in the way authors employed these weapons in their literary works.

Conclusion

Focusing on the sword at the end of the sixteenth century, the preceding three chapters explored the changing fashion of swords and the development of fencing styles in the real world, sword properties used as visual devices on the Early Modern English stage, and the image of the sword formed by poetical expressions in contemporary dramatic works. This dissertation has avoided giving too much weight on sword fighting especially in the discussion as to the theatrical representation. Even though it is inseparably bound up with the sword weapon itself, sword fighting is only part of the whole representation of the sword both inside and outside of the theatre. The aim of this paper is, therefore, to explore the sword weapon, whether or not it was used for the purpose of sword fighting, and the image of the sword in diverse contexts.

In Chapter one, however, it was still necessary to start with a survey of the history of fencing and the introduction of the new fencing style with the rapier; first of all, it is because these facts were fairly closely related to the development of the sword and the replacement of the traditional English weapons by the rapier from the end of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century; and secondly, because

they are highly relevant to the visual and verbal representations of swords in the theatre, which were examined in the following chapters. This chapter then proceeded to an examination into what may seem not necessarily related to fencing, such as the contemporaries' obsession with the length of blade and the decorative elements on the sword. It showed the shift of its function, that is, the sword was becoming a masculine ornament rather than a practical weapon.

Turning our focus onto sword properties in the public playhouse, Chapter two attempted to demonstrate the possibility that there existed a variety of sword properties in different outward appearances and of different materials. In this enquiry, the hand properties dealt with should not be restricted to those in duel or battle scenes, for supposedly their differentiation was made according to the purpose and usage on stage. As explored in the argument on Henslowe's inventories, it is likely that there was a long sword property differentiated from other sword props, foils, which were probably employed not for the stage sword fighting but for ceremonial purposes. If we looked only at swords for stage fighting, we would have failed to recognize some other minor types of sword properties.

The third chapter explored the usage of sword images in association with each carrier's characteristics in the Early Modern English dramatic works. Since there are a

vast number of examples, we needed to set our special focus on the curved sword which was compared with the rapier, but did not limit the range of the exploration to those in the context of sword fighting or fencing. As a case study, the image of the curved sword was traced from Tamburlaine's "curtle-axe" to Rosalind's "curtal-axe," correlating with the changing influence of Marlowe over contemporary playwrights. Tamburlaine's cutlass contributes to creating his mighty image as the "scourge and terror to the world." No matter whether its blade was really curving or not, references to the relatively unfamiliar term, cutlass, appealed to the audience's imagination so as to make the sword property his cutlass, an attribute of the Asian conqueror. Though this impressive image of a curved sword, which was variously named as falchion, cutlass, or scimitar, was inherited in the contemporary dramatic works, it came to be burlesqued after the late 1590s. In this argument, it does not make any sense to read it in fencing contexts, because the curved sword is not easily linked with the fencing image, unlike the rapier. The rapier was argued mainly for the purpose of comparison, though it is worth enquiring into the association of its image with the popularization of the Continental fencing style in England and with the transition of stage sword fighting styles. There is no doubt that the sword property and the image of the sword had been changing along with the style of acting and stage sword fighting. This thesis will be a groundwork for

the further investigation into the theatrical representations of sword fighting in Early Modern English plays.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Anon. *A Brief Abstract of the Genealogie of all the Kynges of England*. 1560.

---. *The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his Three Daughters, Gonerill, Ragan, and Cordella*. London, 1605. Eds. W. W. Greg and R. Warwick Bond. Malone Society Reprints, 1907.

---. *Edmond Ironside and Anthony Brewer's The Love-sick King.* Ed. Randall Martin. New York: Garland, 1991.

---. *Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside*. Ed. Eric Sams. London: Fourth Estate, 1985.

---. *Fair Em*. 1631. Ed. W. W. Greg. London: Malone Society Reprints, 1927.

---. *The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth: Containing the Honourable Battell of Agin-court*. London, 1598. London: Praetorius, 1887.

---. *The Famovs Victories of Henry the Fifth*. *Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas: A Selection of Plays Illustrating the History of the English Drama from its Origin*

down to Shakespeare. Ed. Joseph Quincy Adams. London: George G. Harrap, 1924. 667-90.

---. *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad*. Ed. A. E. H. Swaen. Louvain: Uystprusyst, 1912.

---. *A Larum for London: 1602*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1913.

---. *Look about You: 1600*. Ed. W. W. Greg. Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1913.

---. *The Wars of Cyrus: An Early Classical Narrative Drama of the Child Actors.* Ed. James Paul Brawner. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1942.

---. *The Wit of a Woman 1604*. Ed. W. W. Greg. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1913.

Barnes, Barnabe. *The Devil's Charter by Barnabe Barnes: A Critical Edition*. Ed. Jim C. Pogue. New York: Garland, 1980.

Bas, William. *Sword and Buckler, or, Seruing-Mans Defence*. 1609.

Batman, Stephen. *The Golden Booke of the Leaden Goddes*. London, 1577.

Beaumont, Francis, and John Fletcher. *Love's Cure*. Ed. George Walton Williams. *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*. Vol. 3. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976. 1-111.

Bruyn, Abraham de. *Costumes Civils & Militaires du XVIe siècle*. Bruxelles: Van Trigt, 1872.

Buck, George. *The Third Universitie of England.* Londini, 1615.

Cambini, Andrea. *Two Very Notable Commentaries: The One of the Originall of the Turcks and Empire of the House of Ottomanno, written by A. Cambine, and thother of the warres of the Turcke against G. Scanderbeg, prince of Epiro, tr. Oute of Italian by Iohn Shute.* 1562.

Camden, William. *Annales the True and Royall History of Elizabeth Queene of England.* 1625.

Chamberlain, John. Ed. Norman Egbert McClure. *The Letters of John Chamberlain*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939.

Curio, Cælius Augustinus. *A Notable Historie of the Saracens. As also of Turkes, [etc.] Wherunto is Annexed a Compendious Chronycle of their Yeerely Exploytes, from Mahomets Time tyll 1575.* Drawen out of Augustine Curio and sundry other authors by T. Newton. London, 1575.

Dasent, John Roche, ed. *Acts of the Privy Council of England: New Series*. Vol. 12. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896.

Davenant, William. *The Vnfortvnate Lovers: A Tragedie.* London, 1643.

Dekker, Thomas. *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*. Ed. Fredson Bowers. 4 Vols. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953-61.

Feuillerat, Albert, ed. *Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth*. Louvain: Uystpruyst, 1908.

---, ed. *Documents Relating to the Revels at Court in the Time of King Edward VI and Queen Mary: The Loseley Manuscripts*. Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1963.

Fletcher, John. *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*. Oxford, 1640.

---. *Valentinian*. *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists: Beaumont and Fletcher*. Ed. J. St. Loe Strachey. Vol. 2. London: Fisher Unwin, 1893.

Fletcher, John; Philip Massinger; and Nathan Field. *The Queen of Corinth*. Ed. Robert Kean Turner. *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*. Vol. 8. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992. 1-111.

Ford, John. *Loves Sacrifice. A Tragedie.* London, 1633.

Fuller, Thomas. *The History of the Worthies of England*. 1662.

Goffe, Thomas. *The Tragedy of Orestes.* London, 1633.

Grassi, Giacomo di. *Giacomo di Grassi his true arte of defence.* Trans. I. G. gentleman. London, 1594.

Greene, Robert. *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*. Ed. A. B. Grosart. Vols. 15. New York: Russell & Russell, 1964.

Hall, Edward. *The Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke.* 1548.

Hariot, Thomas, trans., *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. 1590.

Harrison, William. "The Description and Historie of England." *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles*. By Raphael Holinshed. 1586.

Henslowe, Philip. *Henslowe's Diary*. Ed. R. A. Foakes. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002.

Heywood, Thomas. *The First and Second Parts of King Edward the Fourth*. 1599. Philadelphia: Rosenbach, 1922.

---. *The Golden Age. Or the Lives of Jupiter and Saturne, with the Deifying of the Heathen Gods.* London, 1611.

---. *The Rape of Lucrece. Thomas Heywood.* Ed. A. W. Verity. London: Vizetelly, 1888. 327-427.

Holinshed, Raphael. *The Firste Volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Ireland*. 1577.

---. *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande*. 1587.

Hughes, Paul L. and James F. Larkin, ed. *Tudor Royal Proclamations*. Vols. 2 & 3. New Haven: Yale UP, 1969.

Hume, Martin A. S., ed. *Calender of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs, Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas*. Vol. 2. London, 1894.

Jonson, Ben. *Ben Jonson.* Eds. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson. 11 Vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1925-52.

---. *The New Inn*. Ed. Michael Hattaway. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984.

Johnson, Richard. *The Most Famous History of the Seauen Champions of Christendome*. 1596.

Killigrew, Thomas. *The Prisoners and Claracilla*. London, 1641.

Kyd, Thomas. *The Works of Thomas Kyd*. Ed. Frederick S. Boas. Oxford: Clarendon, 1955.

Lant, Thomas. *Sequitur Celebritas & Pompa Funeris.* London, 1588.

Lodge, Edmund. *Illustrations of British History.* Vol. 2. 1791.

Lucan. *Lucan: With an English Translation by J. D. Duff: The Civil War*. Trans. J. D. Duff. 1928. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957.

---. *Lucans Pharsalia: Containing the Civill Warres between Cæsar and Pompey.* Trans. Sir A. Gorges. 1614.

Marlowe, Christopher. *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*. Ed. Fredson Bowers. 2nd ed. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981.

Marston, John. *Antonio and Mellida & Antonio's Revenge*. 1602. Ed. W. W. Greg. Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1921.

---. *Antonio's Revenge*. Ed. Reavley Gair. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1978.

---. *Antonio's Revenge*. *The Selected Plays of John Marston*. Eds. MacDonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986. 93-185.

Mayne, Jasper. *The Amorous War*. 1648.

Middleton, Thomas. *Blurt, Master-Constable*. *The Works of Thomas Middleton*. Ed. A. H. Bullen. Vol. 1. London, 1885. 1-98.

Minadoi, Giovanni Tommaso. *The History of the Warres betweene the Turkes and the Persians.* Trans. Abraham Hartwell. London, 1595.

Mitton, G. E. *Maps of Old London*. London: A. and C. Black, 1908.

Montaigne, Michel de. *Essais.* Tome II. Paris: Garnier, 1962.

---. *Essayes.* Trans. John Florio. 1613.

Nashe, Thomas. *The Vnfortunate Traueller. Or, The life of Iacke Wilton*. London, 1594.

Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. Frank Justus Miller. Vol. 1. London: William Heinemann, 1946.

---. *The. xv. Bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis*. Trans. Arthur Golding. 1567.

Peacham, Henry. *Coach and Sedan, pleasantly disputing*. London, 1636.

Porter, Henry. *The Pleasant History of the Two Angrie Women of Abington*. London, 1599.

Rowley, William. *A Merrie and Pleasant Comedy: Called A Shoo-maker a Gentleman.* London, 1638.

S., W. *The Lamentable Tragedy of Locrine, the Eldest Sonne of King Brutus. Newly Set Foorth, Ouerseene and Corrected.* London, 1595.

Saviolo, Vincentio. *Vincentio Saviolo His Practice. In two bookes. The first intreating of the use of the rapier and dagger. The second, of honor and honourable quarrels.* 1595.

Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It.* Ed. Juliet Dusinberre. London: Thomson Learning, 2006.

---. *As You Like It.* Ed. Michael Hattaway. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.

---. *The Comedy of Errors*. Ed. T. S. Dorsch. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004.

---. *The Comedy of Errors*. *The Works of William Shakespeare*. Ed. Alexander Dyce. 2nd ed. Vol. 2. London: Chapman and Hall, 1866.

---. *The First Folio of Shakespeare*. Ed. Charlton Hinman. New York: Norton, 1968.

---. *Hamlet: First Quarto, 1603*. Menston: Scolar, 1969.

---. *Hamlet: Second Quarto, 1605*. Menston: Scolar, 1969.

---. *Henry VI, Part Three*. Ed. Randall Martin. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001.

---. *King Richard II*. Ed. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens. *The Plays of William Shakespeare*. Vol. 5. 1778. London: Routledge, 1995.

---. *King Richard III*. Ed. Antony Hammond. London: Methuen, 1981.

---. *Love's Labour's Lost*. Ed. G. R. Hibbard. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.

---. *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*. Eds. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus. New York: Norton, 2008.

---. *Othello*. Ed. Norman Sanders. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.

Sidney, Philip. "The Defence of Poesie." 1595. *The Prose Works of Sir Philip Sidney*. Vol. 3. Ed. Albert Feuillerat. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1962. 1-46.

Silver, George. *Paradoxes of Defence.* London, 1599. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1933.

Smythe, John. *Certain Discourses*. London, 1590.

Speed, John. *The History of Great Britaine*. 1611.

Spenser, Edmund. *The Works of Edmund Spenser.* Eds. Edwin Greenlaw, et al. Vols. 4 and 5. 1935. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1961.

Stow, John. *A Suruay of London. Contayning the Originall, Antiquity, Increase, Moderne Estate, and Description of that Citie. With an Appendix, Containing in Latine, Libellum de situ Londini: Written by W. Fitzstephen, in the raigne of Henry the second*. 1598.

Stow, John and E. Howes. *The Annales, or a Generall Chronicle of England, Continued unto 1614.* Londini: Thomae Adams, 1615.

Strachey, William. *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania (1612)*. Eds. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund. London, 1953.

Swetnam, Joseph. *The Schoole of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence*. 1617.

Secondary Sources

Anglin, Jay P. "The Schools of Defense in Elizabethan London." *Renaissance Quarterly* 37.3 (1984): 393-410.

Anglo, Sydney. “How to Kill a Man at your Ease: Fencing Books and the Duelling Ethic.” *Chivalry in the Renaissance.* Ed. Anglo. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990: 1-12.

---. *The Martial Arts of Renaissance Europe*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2000.

Aylward, J. D. *The English Master of Arms: From the Twelfth to the Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956.

Bate, Jonathan. *The Genius of Shakespeare*. London: Picador, 1997.

Beaufort-Spontin, Christian and Matthias Pfaffenbichler. *Meisterwerke der Hofjagd-und Rüstkammer*. Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 2005.

Belsey, Catherine. “Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and Gender in the Comedies.” *Alternative Shakespeares.* Ed. John Drakakis. London: Methuen, 1985. 166-90.

Bevington, David M. *Action is Eloquence: Shakespeare’s Language of Gesture*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1984.

Bosonnet, Felix. *The Function of Stage Properties in Christopher Marlowe’s Plays*. Bern: Francke, 1978.

Bradbrook, M. C. “Shakespeare’s Recollections of Marlowe.” *Shakespeare’s Styles: Essays in Honour of Kenneth Muir.* Eds. Philip Edwards, Inga-Stina Ewbank, and G. K. Hunter. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980. 191-204.

Brooke, Nicholas. “Marlowe as Provocative Agent in Shakespeare’s Early Plays.” *Shakespeare Survey* 14 (1961): 34-44.

Castle, Egerton. *Schools and Masters of Fence: From the Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century*. 1893. London: Arms and Armour, 1969.

Chambers, E. K. *The Elizabethan Stage*. 4 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1923.

---. *Shakespearean Gleanings*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1944.

Charney, Maurice. “The Voice of Marlowe’s Tamburlaine in Early Shakespeare.” *Comparative Drama* 31.2 (1997): 213-23.

Chew, Samuel C. *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance.* New York: Oxford UP, 1937.

Cunningham, J. S. Introduction. *Tamburlaine the Great.* By Christopher Marlowe. Ed. Cunningham. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981.1-105.

Cunningham, J. S. and Eithne Henson. Introduction. *Tamburlaine the Great*. By Christopher Marlowe. Eds. Cunningham and Henson. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1998. 1-32.

Dessen, Alan C. *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.

---. *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.

Dessen, Alan C. and Leslie Thomson, eds. *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.

Dillon, Janette. *Performance and Spectacle in Hall's Chronicle*. London: Society for Theatre Research, 2002.

Dillon, Viscount. "Armour and Weapons." *Shakespeare's England: An Account of the Life and Manners of his Age*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon, 1966. 127-40.

Edelman, Charles. *Brawl ridiculous: Swordfighting in Shakespeare's Plays.* Manchester: Manchester UP, 1992.

Evett, Marianne Brish. Introduction. *The Two Angry Women of Abington: A Critical Edition*. By Henry Porter. Ed. Evett. New York: Garland, 1980. 1-84.

Foakes, R. A. Preface. *Henslowe's Diary*. By Philip Henslowe. Eds. Foakes. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. vii-xii.

---. *Illustrations of the English Stage: 1580-1642.* London: Scolar, 1985.

Greg, Walter W. *Henslowe's Diary Part II: The Commentary*. London: Bullen, 1908.

Gurr, Andrew. *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.

Gurr, Andrew and Mariko Ichikawa. *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.

Harbage, Alfred and S. Schoenbaum, eds. *Annals of English Drama: 975-1700*. London: Methuen, 1964.

Hodgdon, Barbara. "Sexual Disguise and the Theatre of Gender." *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy.* Ed. Alexander Leggatt. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002: 179-97.

Holmes, M. R. *Arms and Armour in Tudor and Stuart London.* London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1957.

Hoy, Cyrus. *Introductions, Notes, and Commentaries to Texts in 'The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker' Edited by Fredson Bowers*. Vol. 4. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980.

Hughes, Alan. Introduction. *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Ed. Hughes. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. 1-47.

Hutton, Alfred. *The Sword and the Centuries or Old Sword Days and Old Sword Ways*. 1901. London: Greenhill, 2003.

Jenkins, Harold. Introduction. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. Ed. Jenkins. London: Methuen, 1982. 1-159.

Kinney, Arthur F. *Shakespeare by Stages: An Historical Introduction.* Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.

Kowzan, Tadeusz. "The Sign in the Theatre: An Introduction to the Semiology of the Art of the Spectacle." Trans. Simon Pleasance. *Diogenes* 61 (1968): 52-80.

Loomba, Ania and Jonathan Burton, eds. *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Low, Jennifer A. *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Matthey, Cyril G. R. Introduction. *The Works of George Silver*. By George Silver. Ed. Matthey. London: George Bell and Sons, 1898. v-xix.

McJannet, Linda. *The Voice of Elizabethan Stage Directions: The Evolution of a Theatrical Code*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 1999.

Miola, Robert S. Introduction. *Every Man in his Humour*. By Ben Jonson. Ed. Miola. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000. 1-77.

Munro, John. "Titus Andronicus." *The Times Literary Supplement* 10 June 1949: 385.

Oakeshott, R. Ewart. *European Weapons and Armour: From the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution.* Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000.

Pollard, A. W. and G. R. Redgrave, eds. *A Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640.* 2nd ed. 2 Vols. London: Bibliographical Society, 1986.

Salomon, Brownell. "Visual and Aural Signs in Performed English Renaissance Play." *Renaissance Drama*, n.s., 5 (1972): 143-69.

Schleiner, Winfried. "'*Divina virago*': Queen Elizabeth as an Amazon." *Studies in Philology* 75. 2 (1978): 163-80.

Schwarz, Kathryn. *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2000.

Sieveking, A. Forbes. "Fencing and Duelling." *Shakespeare's England: An Account of the Life and Manners of his Life.* Vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon, 1966. 389-407.

Shapiro, James. *Rival Playwrights: Marlowe, Jonson, Shakespeare.* New York: Columbia UP, 1991.

---. "'Which is *The Merchant* here, and which *The Jew*?': Shakespeare and the Economics of Influence." *Shakespeare Studies* 20 (1988): 269-79.

Stern, Tiffany. *Making Shakespeare: From Stage to Page*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Teague, Frances N. *Shakespeare's Speaking Properties.* Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1991.

Turner, Robert Kean. Textual Introduction. *The Queen of Corinth*. By John Fletcher; Philip Massinger; and Nathan Field. Ed. Turner. *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*. Vol. 8. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992. 3-9.

Wiggins, Martin. *Shakespeare and the Drama of his Time.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.

Wiggins, Martin, Catherine Richardson, and Mark Merry. *British Drama, 1533-1642: A Catalogue*. Oxford: Oxford UP, forthcoming.

Wilson, J. Dover. Introduction. *Paradoxes of Defence.* By George Silver. 1599. London: Oxford UP, 1933. v-xx.

---. "*Titus Andronicus* on the Stage in 1595." *Shakespeare Survey* (1948) 1: 17-24.

---. *What happens in Hamlet*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1935.

Wright, Celeste Turner. "The Amazons in Elizabethan Literature." *Studies in Philology* 37. 3 (1940): 433-56.